

暁

なつめ

illustration
三嶋くろね

この素晴らしい
世界に8
祝福を!

アクミズ
教団
VS
エリス
教団



この素晴らしい
世界に8
祝福を!



❁ クリス ❁

❁ アクア ❁

❁ カズマ ❁

❁ めぐみん ❁

❁ ダクネス ❁

「まあ構いませんが。私はエリス教徒
というわけでもありませんし」

「私はもちろん手伝えないぞ。
今は領主代行の仕事が忙しい」

「今年はエリス祭りは
取り止めにして、
アクア祭りを
やってみようのー!」

アイギス

おい、レベル高^{たか}えな抱き締めてえ！
抱き心地良さそうな
あの姉ちゃんを抱き締めてえよ！

ウィズ

サキュバス？

ど真ん中の美女は

何なわけ！？

俺あんなの見た事ねえ！

小悪魔通り越して

悪魔っ子だよアレは！

いいじゃんいいじゃん

凄くいいじゃん！

綺麗な顔したエロバディ、

しかも貴族令嬢つか！？



いつの日か私の役目がなくなるような、

そんな平和な世界になりますように……

この素晴らしい世界に祝福を! 8



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口絵・本文イラスト / 三嶋くろね
口絵・本文デザイン /
百足屋ユウコ + ナカムラナナフィ
(ムシカゴグラフィクス)

Character

ダク
ネス

アクア

めぐ
みん

年齢 18歳

職業 クルセイダー

モンスターから攻撃されることに快楽を感じている防御専門の女騎士。大貴族・ダスティネス家のお嬢様でもある。特技は妄想。

年齢 年齢不詳

職業 アークプリースト

若くして死んだ人間を導く女神。カズマと共に魔王の討伐を目指す。好きなものは酒、特技は宴会芸。

年齢 14歳

職業 アークウィザード

紅魔族の中でも随一の天才魔法使い。「爆裂魔法」の魅力に取り憑かれ、それしか使えないし、使わない。好きなものは爆裂魔法。特技は爆裂魔法。趣味は爆裂魔法。

ウイズ

年齢 20歳
職業 店主

バニル

年齢 年齢不詳
職業 大悪魔兼店員

カズマ

年齢 16歳
職業 冒険者

アクアを道連れにした、現世でも異世界でも引き籠もりの冒険者。魔王討伐という任務を既に諦めかけている。

クリス

年齢 15歳?
職業 盗賊

エリス

年齢 年齢不詳
職業 女神

Prologue

It was unbelievable that I, who never participated in any cultural festivals, would be helping out in preparing for a festival in a parallel world.

Even the Axis Cultists, whose very existence was feared, were behaving themselves.

They were staking a lot on the upcoming festival.

Seeing this scene, I couldn't help but sigh.

A parallel world festival with bonfires everywhere seemed like a dream.

It was normal in Japan, but in this parallel world, the dream-like festival seemed out of place.

It was the nostalgic roadside stalls of Japan.

The inhabitants of this parallel world were managing different types of stalls by themselves. It was evident that everyone was truly enjoying the festival.

Even though this festival lasted only a few days every year.

There were beast-men, elves, and dwarves here.

There were even undead, demons, and goddesses.

"Kazuma, Kazuma. I think it is great to host this festival."

Aqua, who was happily watching the festival, turned to me suddenly.

“Thanks for helping the Axis Cult.”

With the dream-like festival in the background, she smiled innocently and said it frankly like she had never done before.

Chapter 1 - Gifting This Dragon With Glory!

Part 1

I was responsible for creating this situation, but what should I do?

This was a small, new café outside Axel City.

And now.

Chris was before me with a smile frozen on her face... No.

“What are you doing here, Lady Eris?”

The Goddess Eris was before me with her identity exposed.

—The second day after I gallantly saved Darkness from being forcefully married out of a sense of responsibility, Alderp, the lord of Axel, suddenly vanished.

At the same time, many hidden evidences of corruption were discovered. Alderp’s evil deeds were exposed.

In the end, Alderp’s assets were confiscated and transferred to the next governing lord of this city.

The next lord of Axel was Darkness’ father.

At the same time, the debt that I paid on behalf of Darkness and the other funds... For example, the repair fees for the city district that was damaged during the defense against Beldia and the repair fees for the lord’s mansion that was destroyed

during the threat of the mobile fortress Destroyer. All these money were returned as a special exception.

Alder's son Walther, who once had a marriage interview with Darkness, was spared from taking responsibility since he was unrelated to his father's crimes. He would be helping Darkness' father from now on.

Currently, Darkness was taking on the temporary role of lord on behalf of her father who had not recovered yet. But perhaps she was dissatisfied with the new nickname I gave her, that willful lady shut herself in the house and refused to come out.

I was here to report the situation to Chris who just returned to Axel City, but...

"—I'm not Lady Eris. I'm Lady Chris, okay?"

I thought that Chris and Eris might be the same person, so I casually put it to the test. Chris continued to have that frozen smile on her face as she said such ridiculous things.

I said to Chris— no, Eris in her current state.

"No, no, no. I have been noticing this since some time ago. Lady Eris, in your current state, you would only use honorifics with addressing your senior Aqua, right? You always call Darkness and Megumin directly by name."

"..... Because I'm a faithful and chivalrous thief who donate the stolen money to the church. I cannot call the arch priest Lady Aqua by name."

Eris' eyes wandered. She scratched the scar on her cheek as she explained it away with a lame excuse.

"When Lady Eris was troubled, she would habitually scratch

her cheek too.”

Hearing this, her finger that was scratching the scar stopped.

“Let me ask again— What are you doing here?”

I asked Eris again as she became silent.

“... Haha, well done, Mr. Kazuma. No, I should say, well done, Mr. Assistant.”

After standing up suddenly, Eris was like a criminal who was exposed by a detective. She gave up and started a monologue.

“You’re right. It’s as you thought. Sometimes adventurer, sometimes chivalrous thief, and sometimes Darkness’ friend... But my real identity is...!”

“You’re unexpectedly enthusiastic, Lady Eris.”

“... Mr. Kazuma, you’re unexpectedly calm... Since my cover was exposed, it can’t be helped. I will explain everything here —”

Eris said and sat back down. She changed her usual manner and said with a serious expression.

Her serious expression made it difficult to think of the big boss I am so familiar with. The current her was Eris, the most respected goddess in this world.

Facing her like this, I...

“But I really didn’t think that boss would actually be Lady Eris. After all, your personalities and mannerisms are different. Oh, let me apologize. I’m really sorry that I stole Lady Eris’ panties when we first met.”

“... ..”

I didn't care about the serious mood and apologized for my misdeed during our first encounter.

Eris made a troubled expression as if she wanted to say something, but stopped herself from doing so.

“Now that I think of it, there were other hints too. When we went to clear the Keele's dungeon and when boss taught me the thief skills, you said such things before. Something like ‘Because a senior who once took care of me was making unreasonable demands, I became really busy.’”

Now that I thought of it, the reason for her suddenly becoming busy was clear.

“You were busy dealing with the aftermath because Aqua forcefully revive me after I was killed by the Winter Shogun, right? ... Ah, I must apologize for that too. I'm very sorry for randomly groping you when I caught you infiltrating into the mansion.”

“Stop! Whatever is fine! Or rather, stop reminding me of them!”

Eris blushed and knocked on the table repeatedly to interrupt me.

Then, she sighed softly, observed the surrounding, and whispered to me.

“In this situation, don't call me Lady Eris, Mr. Kazuma... no, Mr. Assistant. Watch your mannerisms too. Instead of a reverent tone, you should speak to me in your casual tone as before. Please treat me as Chris.”

“... Chris. If you say so, I don’t mind. Then, let me ask some questions. Why are you in the mortal world? Why is a goddess stealing? Also, which of your mannerism and personality is the real you?”

“Wa-Wait. I can’t answer if you ask so many questions at once!”

Chris looked around again, coughed, and said seriously.

“Seriously... One of the reasons I’m in the mortal world is to find divine relics.”

Divine relics.

Those were powerful cheat items given to people who were sent to this world.

To recover the divine relics which lost their masters and then give them to the people who would come to this world.

This probably was the main reason she was in the mortal world.

“I see. That’s why you took the thief job since it would be more convenient to recover the divine relics. Unlike a certain goddess who only eats and sleeps, you are really serious and responsible... You said this was one of the reasons. What are the other reasons?”

Hearing my question, Eris’ serious expression softened slightly.

“Also, it was to be a friend to a certain noble lady who wished to have companions...”

She said and smiled shyly, scratching the scar on her cheek.

Darkness' father mentioned this before.

Before she became an adventurer, Darkness used to visit Eris Church daily to pray that she could find adventuring companions.

Then, one day on the way back from church, she met Chris.

"... What can I say? I feel that Lady Eris is really a goddess."

"I told you not to call me Lady Eris! ... No, but I actually enjoyed adventuring with Darkness. My real identity is a secret between just the two of us, okay? Especially Darkness. Don't ever let her know, okay?"

Chris said as she shyly look away and scratched her cheek.

Perhaps because Eris was inside that body, every movement made by her seemed very cute.

This must be the enhancement of a goddess.

But to guide the dead, find divine relics, and even befriend her own worshipper... She really loved working.

I wished the other goddess, who was still eating snacks when I died, could learn from her example.

"Then, for my last question, which mannerism and personality is real?"

Eris made a naughty expression as if she was about to pull a prank.

"Between Chris and Eris, which one do you like?"

"I like both."

“Uh... Oh... Is it? I wasn’t expecting you to respond without hesitation. I thought you would be... How should I say this? ... the kind of person who hesitates at saying this confession-like words.”

Chris’ eyes wandered uneasily as she suspiciously opened and closed the salt bottle on the table.

“No. I wasn’t confessing. It’s just stating my plain preference... The tomboyish boss and the soothing Lady Eris. I felt neither should be given up... Ah! If Chris and Eris could be swapped back and forth daily, it would be like dating two people at the same time! That’s Lady Eris for you. You’re so awesome to be able to make a solo harem. Please go out with me...”

“You are the worst!! You really are a scum! Also, I told you not to call me Lady Eris!”

I caught the salt bottle Chris threw at me and felt relaxed at our conversation.

For some reasons, once I knew she was Eris, I could easily say that I liked her and asked her to go out with me.

Was it because she was an untouchable existence, the goddess Eris whom I admired?

Or was it because she was my friend Chris who did stupid things with me, like forming a thieving band?

I didn’t know what was the reason, but such subtle connection gave a soothing feeling.

“Sigh... Really. A climatic scene like revealing my secret identity was ruined...”

“I have nothing else but bad premonitions— Are you going to

make me find divine relics for you?”

Facing the cautious me, Chris grinned widely.

“You caught on quickly, Mr. Assistant! The divine relic this time is the Sacred Armor Aegis. It was a set with the Sacred Shield Aegis, but we just need to find the armor this time...”

“I’m not listening. I’m not listening! I don’t want to head down such dangerous roads anymore! Recently, my relationship with Megumin is pretty good. Darkness seemed to be somewhat interested in me too! And after receiving the large amount of money, there was no need to work. I want to spend my decadent life with everyone affectionately!!”

“You just asked me to go out with you! What are you saying now!? I can entrust only you with this job! Ah, hey, don’t cover your ears. Aren’t you going to obey your big boss’ orders!?”

Chris shouted and shook me as I covered my ears and lay my head on the table.

Several customers and staff took notice of our disturbance.

Maybe she realized their gaze, Chris finally quieted down.

I thought she had given up, but she slowly lifted her head...

“Mr. Satou Kazuma. Please... For the sake of this world, can you please help me...?”

The goddess Eris took a beseeching pose before me... No, before me was Chris who wore the expression of the melancholic Eris.

.....That's unfair, Lady Eris.



Part 2

—After the above incident, I accepted Chris' request. Some time after that. In the living room of my mansion.

“Everyone. Humans are a species capable of conversation. Let us talk this through.”

With both hands bound by powerful magic ropes, Vanir said as he knelt in the living room.

Aqua and Wiz separately squatted on either side of him. They frowned and stared at Vanir so closely that they would touch his face in a few more millimeters.

Darkness finally came forth from her home. She was now standing before Vanir, frowning and crossing her arms.

Darkness had returned safely after being coerced into marriage by Alderp. The lost funds were also returned.

For me, this was a happy ending, but...

“You are the one who profited most from that disturbance, right? It's so good to be able to buy the rights to various products from Kazuma so cheaply... I heard about it. You resold Kazuma's product rights at high price and earned a huge profit. You are so clever, so there must be other solutions besides such indirect ones? Tell us the truth, okay?”

Aqua said as she carefully hugged the egg named Emperor Zell.

“Mr. Vanir. What have you been doing behind my back? You resold the product rights you got cheaply from Mr. Kazuma?”

Unbelievable...! Ah, what should I do!? To think those money in the vault came from blackmailing Mr. Kazuma...! I want to return it, but the money has already...!"

Wiz covered her face and apologized guiltily.

Looking at her as she said, "My house's Vanir has troubled you. I'm sorry, so sorry." ... I started to feel sorry for her instead.

"Calm down, gangster girl and destitute shop owner. Although there are other ways to... solve this... problem...? ... Wait. Thou disaster of a shop owner, what didst thou just say? What happened to the money moi left in the vault? That isn't an amount that could be spent so easily."

Vanir, who was trying to placate Aqua and Wiz, stopped.

Wiz, who was covering her face with her hands, lifted her head. Her expression brightened up.

"About that— praise me, Mr Vanir. Actually, while I was tending the shop, a regular patron of mine brought a lot of manatites. He said he would sell them to me at half price, so I used all the money in the vault to buy them! I really bought some good stuff this time! Based on my evaluation, those were definitely high grade manatites!"

Manatites were one-use items that could provide magic power for magic which were affiliated with the crystals.

They were expensive and could only be used once.

Therefore, in this city where most adventurers were rookies, there was no demand for such high grade manatites.

I felt pity for Vanir who was hearing this.

I casually asked Vanir.

“Forget it. I didn’t think you would do that much. But I will ask you this. According to Aqua, Darkness’ father was under a devil’s curse... And you are the only devil in this city.”

That was right. This was the reason Vanir was considered the prime suspect, but...

“Hahahaha. Moi would never use a curse that could kill the victim! The one who placed the curse was a arch devil with strange mannerism and a screw loose in the head.”

“Isn’t that you?”

Aqua and Wiz heard that and tightly grabbed Vanir’s shoulders. Darkness, whose father was cursed this time, took a step forward.

“Wait. Dost thou think that a gentleman like moi would be a broken devil with strange mannerism? Come on, let’s be reasonable! Moi admit that moi did a lot of circuitous matters this time. Moi admit that things developed so moi could taste the negative emotions of the lord after his bride was snatched away. But moi wished thou would listen to moi explanation. Especially thou, who has been staring at moi since earlier, who developed strong feelings for that guy over there after this incident, who changed all the clothes thou wear in the house to thin, flimsy material...”

“Ahhh! For killing my father!!”

“Hey, don’t break my mask! Don’t intentionally break my mask! And your father is not dead!”

Darkness suddenly shouted and rushed at Vanir, who was pinned by Aqua and Wiz. She attempted to break his mask.

Megumin pulled on my sleeve as I watched the scene.

“Kazuma. It seemed Vanir is confirmed to be the mastermind behind the incident. I think I can go outside the city for my daily explosion now. Kazuma, if you don't mind, can you come with me?”

“Fine. This doesn't seem like it would end soon anyway, so I will go with you. When we return, they should have calmed down by then.”

After saying that, I casually geared up and left with Megumin.

Part 3

“—By the way, I haven’t thanked you yet.”

A short while after leaving the city. On the way towards the hillside where there were a lot of boulders.

Megumin, who was walking beside me, suddenly said.

“Thanks? What for? ... Ah, is it for apologizing to the parents after you made their kid cry? That was in the past. But from now on, don’t bully a kid just because he calls you names, okay?”

“N-Not that pathetic matter! And I wasn’t in the wrong then. It was that kid’s fault for looking down on Crimson Magic Clan!”

As Megumin became agitated, we arrived at the site for explosions.

Recently, we came here every day, since Megumin seemed to like it here.

I didn’t want to know what exactly she liked about this place, but there were a lot of boulders around.

Anyway, instead of using Explosion magic in a random location, she probably wanted to satisfy her destructive impulse by smashing those boulders.

I originally intended to earn some experience points by killing monsters along the way, but the monsters didn’t appear at this time.

“I want to thank you for saving Darkness.”

Megumin casually found a large boulder by the hillside. She knocked on the boulder to check its state as she said that without turning her head.

It seemed she found today's target.

“That incident huh? Darkness owed me too much. I won't let her leave the party so easily. Besides, it wasn't the first time I wiped your asses. There's no need for thanks at this point.”

I shrugged casually and said to Megumin, who was distancing herself from the boulder.

Megumin smiled and answered happily.

“Even so, it is still necessary. I said this before back in the Home of the Crimson Magic...”

She turned her back on me and raised her staff—

“You complain a lot, but in the end, you will still help everyone. I truly like you the way you are.”

And casually said such words...

“... Hey, I'm serious. Don't say such things so casually. I don't know whether to take it seriously or not. I remembered you said this before, but don't say you like me so casually. I will take it the wrong way. What does it mean? Should I take it as a serious confession?”

To prevent her from noticing the stirring in my heart, I pretended to be calm about it.

“Who knows about that sort of thing? You can interpret it whichever way you like.”

Megumin kept her back turned and said, laughing.

... This girl was being serious?

Or was she fooling me?

No, wait. Think about it, Satou Kazuma.

Since the beginning, Megumin would always seem restless around me and had an aura of good feelings.

I didn't know why she would affirm her good feelings towards me now, but the only reason I could think of was the incident where I saved Darkness.

It was a bit embarrassing to say it myself, but at that time, I was probably really cool.

Yes. I was like the protagonist of a romance novel.

That night after saving Darkness, I was shivering beneath my blanket, worrying over if I would be executed for that exaggerated event. However, when I thought about it now, I was practically the hero back then.

... Besides, we were living in the same house for quite long now.

It wouldn't be surprising if someone developed affections towards me. Or rather, it was strange that I still did not have a harem after living among the girls for so long.

Say it. Say it, Satou Kazuma. The success rate is high. Don't be afraid!

There wouldn't be rejection or being kept at a distance! ...

Probably not...!

Re-Really not?

Okay, I was ready. No problem. Be courageous!

From today on, I would be a normie!!

“About that... Megumin, I’m very happy about your feelings. Actually, I’m also...”

“Explosion—!!”

Part 4

“What happened to you? What are you being annoyed about?”

Since I started carrying her on my back, Megumin was grumbling non-stop like a dense protagonist.

I didn't actually think much of Megumin, so even if I was interrupted, it was fine.

Right. Her looks were not bad, but she was a weirdo who only knew explosions and more explosions.

I was nearly taken along by the mood, but I wouldn't be tricked so easily.

“Kazuma. When I was casting Explosion magic, did you say something? I didn't hear anything because of the explosive noise, but I felt you were saying something important.”

“Nothing! I feel nothing about Megumin!”

“What are you being annoyed about? You are even being coy. You should keep such bad tempers in check. When we get back home, I will give you one extra pudding that I bought last time.”

“... I'll forgive you if you give me two more.”

I said to Megumin as I placed my hand on the main door.

Then the door was opened.

“I can't give you two more. Including Aqua's and Darkness'

share, there was only one extra. If you get two more, someone will have nothing to eat...”

Megumin stopped talking midway.

... Of course, I was stunned too.

Back in the house, before us was...

“Give it back! Quickly give it back! Give my cute Emperor Zell back to me!! Wah! Give it back!”

“Hahahahaha! You deserved it, you cuckolded goddess. Your precious pet... Haha... Damn it, hey! Go away, bird. Go back to your owner!”

Before us, Aqua was wailing and pounding on Vanir’s back.

... Wiz and Darkness were on the carpet with their eyes rolled up.

Wrong. Wiz was so translucent that she was about to vanish.

And the most important thing was probably the cause of Aqua’s wailing.

At the feet of Vanir, who was being pounded by Aqua...

“Chirp.”

That was definitely a chick.

That chick was pestering Vanir’s feet.

“—So what is going on here?”

I put Megumin down on the sofa and made Aqua and Vanir sit up straight before me to explain matters.

I didn't know the details yet, but for Wiz to be near the vanishing point and for Darkness to roll back her eyes, these two people must have done something.

Darkness wouldn't be hurt by Aqua's attacks. Vanir's attacks wouldn't cause Wiz to vanish.

The two people who were kneeling on the carpet pointed at each other.

"It was this person..." x2

The two people who said exactly the same thing glared at each other at a very close distance.

Aqua frowned and clenched her teeth in rage.

It was difficult to see Vanir's expression because of his mask, but his mouth was twitching.

There was a yellow fur ball on Vanir's legs.

... The situation was so messed up. What should I do?

At a loss, I decided to listen to them one by one.

"Listen to me! Listen to me, Kazuma! When we were interrogating this weird masked guy, he suddenly attacked us! He even shouted Vanir-style whatever! I deflected it with magic, but it hit Darkness and she collapsed. I counter-attacked with purification magic! Then this guy used Wiz as a shield and caused her to nearly vanish! When I decided to destroy this guy...!"

I see.

I couldn't understand.

“Hahaha. Thou only mention the things beneficial to thyself, ye insidious woman! This woman, along with that muscle woman and that traitorous shop owner, declared the innocent moi to be guilty! Moi could not possibly accept a judgment without a lawyer, so I acted in self-defense by attacking with my Vanir-style Killer Ray. Then, this fellow reflected moi ray to that muscle woman. Then, this unreasonable woman used magic on moi in revenge. Moi promptly used the shop owner as a shield to ensure my safety. When moi decided to settle it all at once...!”

“Emperor Zell was born.” x2

I see.

I couldn't understand.

Part 5

—Kingsford Zeldman.

The one chosen by the water goddess out of a clutch of eggs was basically a normal chick.

“The name isn’t bad. It is a name full of majesty. No wonder it wants to stay close to moi.”

“Of course it is good. Who did you think gave its name? Although it’s unacceptable for it to be close to you, this kid was chosen by a goddess like me. It is destined to become the emperor of dragons.”

Kneeling on the carpet, Vanir and Aqua argued over this, while the chick was completely unconcerned.

Its appearance was no different from a typical chick in Japan.

As a weak newborn, it was not afraid before a goddess and a devil. It even stood majestically upon the legs of the greater devil and stared at the devil.

Kingsford Zeldman.

It bore the hope of becoming the dragon king and had the nickname of Emperor Zell.

I casually picked up Emperor Zell from Vanir’s legs and said.

“... So what should we do about this thing? How about fried chicken?”

“No way! Kazuma, I always felt you are inhuman! Sometimes, I feel that this masked devil has more humanity than you!”

“Don’t be rude, cuckolded goddess. This man’s evil is unmatched in Axel since the disappearance of the evil lord. Don’t compare him to moi, who is popular for patrolling the area when children go home from school.”

Could I cry?

... But I roughly understood the situation.

While Aqua and Vanir were arguing, Emperor Zell hatched. Since it saw Vanir first, it acknowledged Vanir as its parent.

Megumin, who was resting on the sofa, looked at Emperor Zell in my hands with admiration and interest.

She probably wanted to touch it.

I passed Emperor Zell to Megumin and took care of Wiz and Darkness, who were still on the floor.

“... Why is a newborn so cute? Is its cuteness a defense mechanism against predators?”

Megumin looked at Emperor Zell as she held it gently in her hands. I came next to the collapsed Wiz and Darkness.

... Wiz’s body was still almost transparent. This was beyond me.

So I lifted up Darkness from the carpet and patted her face, but she did not wake up.

“In any case, you are hindering Emperor Zell’s education, so get lost. I will let this kid receive elite education... Look at Megumin’s decadent expression as she looked at Emperor

Zell. She's totally seduced. Emperor Zell is born a lady killer. It was said that beautiful women are weak against a heroic male. His future is bright."

"Hmph. No need for ye to say. Moi will be leaving anyway. After all, the money moi earned have all been turned to rocks by that liability of a shop owner. Then, goodbye, humans. Please patronize Wiz's Magic Tool Shop again when thou saved some money!"

Vanir said and grabbed the collar of Wiz, whose body had turned translucent.

"Hey. Sorry, but can thou give moi some sugared water? Left alone like this, this undead lich will become a dead lich. Let her regain some nutrients, give her some sugared water and she will revive like a bug."

What was Wiz's usual diet?

Vanir said and walked towards the kitchen...

"Ah!? Wh-What is it, Emperor Zell!?"

Megumin was shocked when Emperor Zell suddenly started struggling in her hands. She put it gently down on the carpet.

What was this? Even Megumin called it Emperor Zell normally. Wasn't there a sense of wrongness?

This is a chick, after all.

Even though it is a chicken, its name was the most impressive among us.

"... Hm?"

Before everyone, the yellow fur ball with impressive name

walked unsteadily over to Vanir's feet and rubbed its body against Vanir's shoe.

After seeing this, Aqua pestered me.

"Wah—! Emperor Zell has been stolen! Kazuma! Kazuma! Please, destroy this masked devil and return Emperor Zell to me!"

"No. Why should I do it? You are capable of dealing with Vanir. Anyway, it is just a chick, not a dragon. Why can't you accept this?"

Aqua reached for Emperor Zell who was next to Vanir and lovingly carried it to her bosom.

"If I destroy the masked devil, Emperor Zell who is close to him would hate me... Maybe the blind Kazuma cannot distinguish it, but this kid is a rare breed of dragon with fur, the shaggy dragon."

"I understand why you do not want to admit that you were cheated, but give it up. This guy is definitely a normal chick."

I looked at Aqua who was covering her ears and ignoring me. Then, I said to Vanir who was showering Wiz with sugared water.

"Hey, Darkness shows no sign of recovery. Is this a problem?"

Vanir listened, looked at Darkness in disbelief, and said.

"Well, her wound should be healed by the goddess over there. But it is amazing to still be alive after receiving moi Vanir-style Killer Ray. True to its name, the ray kills anyone it hits. Moi wants to know why she is not dead yet. Perhaps her magic resistance is ridiculously high... But this incident will hurt moi reputation as a harmless person. After that woman

wakes up, ask her for moi, 'How thick are thy muscles?'"

"I will get beaten up for that... Forget it. So what should we do with this thing?"

Vanir lowered his head to look at the yellow fur ball which refused to leave his feet.



I felt it wasn't a problem if Vanir took it away.

"Well. It can't be helped to fall in love with moi who art an idol in the eyes of women. But the difference in species between birds and devils is simply too great. Although moi feel sorry for Emperor Zell, he just have to give up on moi."

"No, it evidently considers you as its parent."

Vanir crooned softly.

"... It can't be helped then. Hey, where is Emperor Zell's nest?"

Aqua wordlessly pointed to the sofa in the living room.

No. Don't make that place into a nest.

Vanir took a look and carried Emperor Zell to sit on the sofa.

Emperor Zell was obedient only when carried by Vanir.

This fellow truly treated Vanir as its parent.

Vanir lowered his body with Emperor Zell within both his hands...

"Shred!"

After a sound, Vanir split into two.

Emperor Zell was being carried by Vanir's clone, so it couldn't see the second Vanir.

After leaving an empty shell to carry Emperor Zell, the devil seemingly capable of doing anything waved and said.

“Then, moi will be leaving.”

“I think that I’m now familiar with the creatures of this world, but you are the wackiest of them all.”

Part 6

On the second morning after the birth of my home's mascot.

"... Hey, Kazuma. Can you not eat eggs in front of Emperor Zell? I feel that the kid is shivering as it looks at you."

Aqua said to me as she fed bread crumbs to Emperor Zell.

"Isn't it a dragon? If so, it has no reason to fear someone like me... Rather, can you do something about Vanir's empty shell? Its sense of existence is too strong. I can't eat at ease while that thing is staring."

I used my chopsticks to point at Vanir's empty shell, Emperor Zell's substitute nest, currently seated next to Aqua.

Although there was nothing inside, its exterior looked like Vanir himself, so it had a strong sense of existence. Even without moving, it made people uneasy.

"This can't be helped. After all, Emperor Zell likes this... Anyway, what's up with that kid now?"

After being pecked painfully by Emperor Zell, Aqua looked at the corner of the room.

"It looks like it is afraid of this yellow fur ball."

In the corner, Chomusuke was curled into a ball, maintaining vigilance against Emperor Zell.

I was worried that the yellow fur ball would be eaten by the black fur ball, but I didn't expect it to be like this.

“Probably because of magic power.”

Megumin stared at Emperor Zell as she ate her toast and said.

“Magic power?”

“Yes. Magic power. I can sense great magic power from Emperor Zell.”

... From this fur ball?

“It was probably because while the egg was incubating, it received magic power from the most magically powerful people in this city, namely Aqua, Vanir, Wiz, and myself. When a dragon incubates its eggs, it would channel magic power into them to keep warm, allowing the baby dragons to hatch with great magic power. It is a famous legend, but it is surprising that the same phenomenon happened with a chicken egg. This may be a good news to the people who rear dragons.”

Which meant what exactly?

Could this chicken become a powerful fighting force like Aqua said?

“Then, if we take care of it, it could eventually become a trump card against the devil king...”

“Nope. It’s just a chicken after all. It can’t use magic, can’t use magic power to fly like a dragon, and can’t exhale dragon breath.”

.....

“Then would it awaken great power one day? Its magic power could induce it to become a chicken with super physical

attributes...”

“That’s impossible. Magic power can control aging and extend one’s lifespan, but this kid is just an ordinary chicken. It won’t awaken any special power. At most, it could use its vast magic power to frighten off wild monsters.”

What a waste.

“Ah! Right. Then, I can use Drain Touch skill to use fellow as a substitute manatite and replenish magic power.”

“That won’t work either. It’s just an ordinary chicken. If you are not careful, you can drain its life force and it will die.”

What was the use of this thing?

“... If I eat this fellow, will it instantly boost my magic power?”

“... I don’t know. I don’t really want to do that since it’s cute, but if it can instantly increase magic power, it might be worth a try.”

“If you are going to look at my kid like that, get lost! Darkness, you must protect Emperor Zell from these two people!”

Darkness gracefully drank black tea after breakfast, and lightly laughed as she watched our exchange.

“... Haha. Looking at you people, I feel like I have really returned. Kazuma, Megumin, don’t bully Aqua too much. From now on, we must live together peacefully. No more quarrels. Let’s be together harmoniously.”

She said and smiled peacefully at us.

“... You shut yourself at home earlier. Now that you have come out, your mood has improved. After being abandoned by that lord old man, is your emotional scar really healed? But I feel that a used woman who is still a virgin is quite new and refreshing. It’s not bad for you to keep accumulating attributes.”

“I wasn’t abandoned. The lord went missing because he escaped after his corruption was exposed! ... And I’m not a used woman. My family registry is still clean and pure.”

Darkness said and smiled fearlessly.

“...? ...Ah! You used the privilege of nobility to tamper with the records! Hey, Megumin. Look at what she has become. She acted cool before by saying that Dustiness family would not abuse its political power, but the moment there’s trouble, this is what she does.”

“Darkness has truly changed a lot since then. She is no longer stubborn and inflexible. Her brain has softened probably because she is being influenced by Kazuma.”

Darkness blushed after her actions were exposed.

“Both of you, stop it! Actually, Darkness is a very dreamy girl, okay? She likes cute dresses even though she says they don’t suit her. She likes dolls too. She is good girl who will take note of when nobody else is around so she can secretly play with Emperor Zell! Such a pure and lovable Darkness merely tampered with her family registry a bit... Ah, what are you doing, Darkness? I was defending you!”

At the moment when Darkness tearfully attempted to pounce at Aqua and cover her mouth.

There was a knock on the main door, followed by the sound

of the door opening.

“Sorry to intrude... Everyone, it seems rather joyful today too?”

The one who entered through the door was Chris, who smiled bitterly while looking at our usual selves.

Part 7

“—That’s how it is. I requested Mr. Assistant’s help previously. But if possible, I hope everyone can help find the divine relics.”

Chris explained the situation. She continued to consciously stare at Vanir’s empty shell that was Emperor Zell’s nest. She sighed.

After Chris finished explaining, Darkness frowned with an apologetic look.

“I would like to help you... But sorry, Chris. Because the lord is currently missing, I must perform the lordship duties on behalf of my father who has not recovered yet. Therefore, I can only help out after my father’s health has recovered...”

“No problem. After all, your work is more important. I’m happy that you wanted to help me. Thank you, Darkness.”

Chris smiled and said to Darkness, then looked expectantly at the other two people.

“I’ll help if I can, but my capabilities are very limited, okay? If those divine relics are in the hands of villains, I can help you to threaten them with Explosion magic.”

“Th-Thank you, Megumin. If there’s a need to trouble you, I will ask for you then. Uh, then...”

Chris looked expectantly at Aqua. Aqua, who was cuddling Emperor Zell, plainly rejected.

“It’s regrettable. I can’t help.”

Perhaps surprised by these words, everyone was looking at Aqua.

“Other than feeding the chick, you are just idling away, right? You are the most idle out of everyone here. Go and help her.”

Aqua hugged Emperor Zell and merely smiled at my words.

It was infuriating, but the conversation couldn't go on if I made her cry.

As if the tiny wings of Emperor Zell felt good in her arms, Aqua kept stroking it and said in satisfaction.

“Kazuma. Do you understand a parent's feelings?”

“... What are you asking all of a sudden? If I understand such things, my online friends won't call me Mr. Kazuma Who Made His Mother Cry.”

“Yes, that's true. That's Kazuma for you. You just play games every day without going to school. You just ignore any attempt to urge you to go to school. So hopeless... But even a useless son like you is adorable in a parent's eyes.”

If Aqua was talking about me, I would give her a whipping.

“Hopeless kids are cute. I know that, but I want this kid to become stronger than everyone, become the most respected dragon! Elite education is a necessity for it to rise to the top of the dragon world... So the clever me thought of this. Look, people say that kids grow up watching the silhouettes of their parents, right? So I intended to let this kid see how powerful and respected I am.”

I asked Aqua, who was serious like never before.

“What exactly do you intend to do?”

“I think that my current power is slightly insufficient to defeat the devil king, so that will be the last resort.”

“..... I don't know what kind of power you have that is slightly insufficient to defeat the devil king, but didn't you originally intend to use this chick as a fighting force against the devil king? It seems your premise has changed.”

“Kazuma, what are you saying? How can I let my cute kid do such dangerous things?”

“You are the one talking nonsense.”

Did this fellow awaken her motherly instinct while incubating the egg?

“But letting it witness my power can wait. Compared to that, currently there is an even more important event.”

... Important event?

Aqua looked around at us.

“Has everyone heard of Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival?”

She suddenly said such things.

—Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival.

That was a festival whereby people joyfully give thanks to the goddess of luck Eris for passing a year safely.

It was reportedly a customary event that happened around this season annually in this world.

I glanced at Chris, who was drinking black tea next to me. She shyly looked away.

“This city will be hosting Eris Festival, right? My village has done it too. It was said that if you dress up as the goddess of luck Eris on that day, you will spend the next year safely until the next festival.”

Eh. Was that really such a good thing?

I sighed and looked at Chris, but she gently shook her head.

It seemed to be a superstition.

“My family participates in Eris Festival annually. Every generation of the Dustiness family have always been respected Eris Cultists. We donate a lot of money every year to the festive event.”

Chris looked embarrassed at hearing this.

“This means we can see people cosplaying as Lady Eris in this city... Hey, I’m somewhat looking forward to this!”

“Is it? I don’t quite like that celebration, because it isn’t just women who dress up as the goddess Eris.”

“That information is unnecessary.”

At this time, Aqua slammed the table and said.

“Everyone, why are you being excited!? I’m not asking everyone to enjoy the celebration! I’m being left aside... Ouch, ouch, ouch! Emperor Zell, why are you pecking me!? What about mommy are you dissatisfied with!?”

Aqua was about to say something, but the slam on the table frightened the chick causing it to peck her hand.

“What are you trying to say?”

Aqua responded to query.

“Since there’s an Eris Festival, it would be unfair not to have an Aqua Festival. Let’s put an end to Eris Festival this year and replace it with Aqua Festival!”

Chris sprayed the tea out of her mouth.

Aqua ignored the coughing Chris and continued loudly.

“Don’t you think it’s very unfair!? There’s an Eris Festival, yet why is there no celebration for Aqua who is Eris’ senior? Isn’t it fine for me to take her place once in a while!? I want to let Emperor Zell see my awesomeness!”

What was this girl saying in front of Eris herself?

“And I don’t know why Eris is so popular! That kid looks very demure, but she’s actually very naughty, okay? And she takes responsibility for many things on her own initiative. She’s a boring girl who tries to do everything by herself. Previously, I helped that immature kid to clean up her mess so many times!”

I moved close to Chris, who was still coughing, and whispered to her ear.

“What is she talking about? Did you really let her help you a lot of times?”

“... Ju-Just once. Because I was continuously doing the work senior pushed to me, my own work began to pile up without me realizing... When I was troubled by this, senior said with self-satisfaction, ‘Really, you are hopeless! Eris just can’t do without me!’ and helped me out...”

Hey, what the heck was that?

Darkness ignored our private conversation and said to Aqua.

“Seriously. Aqua, do you know that you have such bad luck because you always make impertinent remarks to belittle Lady Eris? Aqua’s repeated sufferings are no doubt divine retributions from Lady Eris.”

“What! So when a wild dog I was playing with suddenly chased and bit me, and when my ice cream dropped on the floor, it was all Eris’ doings!? Why is Eris that cute wench like this!?”

I glanced to my side and saw Chris violently shaking her head in tears.

“Uh, whatever it is. Of course I won’t be helping. I said earlier, I have a lot of lordship duties to perform. I won’t be able to find time to be with you during the celebrations.”

“Why! I just joined Kazuma to rescue you from marriage. I even removed the curse placed on your father!”

“Ugh... I-If you say that, I got nothing to retort, but I’m still a devout Eris Cultist...”

Hearing Darkness’ reply, Chris breathed a out in relief.

“Enough. Darkness is a used woman and an abandoned bride!”

“A second-hand good!? Wait, Aqua, this nickname is...!”

“Megumin!? What about you, Megumin!? You will help out, right!?”

“A used woman, an abandoned bride...”

The used woman was on the verge of tears and lowered her

head. At this time, Megumin, who was gently caressing Emperor Zell, said.

“I have no problem with that, since I’m not an Eris Cultist. I also know some Axis Cultists, who took care of me previously.”

“!?”

Darkness raised her head in surprise, while Aqua expressed a naïve sense of joy.

“That’s my Megumin! Kazuma will of course—”

“Not do it.”

“Come and help, you damn NEET! You are sleeping all the time! I say, please. I will let you feed Emperor Zell! Only once!”

“No! Why is feeding that chick considered a reward!?”

“Uh, I kind of want to feed it...”

It seemed it was indeed a reward for most people here.

“Anyway, it’s impossible to end Eris Festival. The Eris Cultists would go berserk, right?”

“Eh... It’s Kazuma’s job to resolve such issues...”

“Are you joking?”

Hearing my retorts, Chris breathed out in relief.

Aqua stood up aggressively and declared.

“Forget it, petty Kazuma! I will resolve everything together

with Megumin and Chris!”

“Ehh———!?”

Chris cried out in her loudest voice for today.

Chapter 2 - Gifting This Sacred Armor With A Master!

Part 1

The sunlight of the summer penetrated through the gaps of the thick window curtains.

To avoid the sunlight, I buried my head in the blanket to enjoy the warmth. At this time, there was a violent knocking on the door.

“Kazuma, how much longer are you going to sleep!? Are you dressed? You are not doing anything weird, right? No right? I’m coming in! ...Why is it so cold!?”

Aqua, who was in high spirits early in the morning, entered the room and cried out.

My head emerged from the blanket.

“Hey, stop shouting in the morning. Close the door or the cold air will escape.”

“I say this every time— It is noon already. And why is the room so cold? Is the Winter Shogun in your closet? Our house already has Chomusuke and Emperor Zell. We don’t need another pet, okay?”

“Why must I keep such a dangerous thing as a pet? Look at the corners of the room. There are buckets in every corner, right? There’s ice inside them.”

Aqua was probably intrigued by my words. She looked inside

the container.

“Where did you get ice in the hot summer? I want some ice to help me sleep at night too.”

“Remember when Wiz said that she bought a lot of high grade manatite? So I had an idea. By using the power of money, I bought the manatite cheaply in bulk, then use Freeze magic to create a lot of ice. This makes the room really cool even in summer, so I can daydream under my blanket. There are few things more enjoyable than this.”

Aqua looked at me under the blanket with envy and said.

“Kazuma, your ability to waste money and magic is unsurpassed... I say, tonight would probably be hot too. Can you make some ice for me at night?”

“Sure, but why are you here now? Aren’t you going to Axis Cult Church today?”

Yesterday, Aqua forcefully enlisted Chris for help and declared that she would gather her worshippers in the Axis Cult Church today, but...

“Kazuma has never been loved, so you probably don’t know this feeling. But isn’t it a bit embarrassing to ask my worshippers to host a celebration to praise myself? So I hoped that someone will accompany me and insinuate them to host the event.”

Aqua said as she placed her hands into a bucket and enjoyed the ice.

“You dare to say that to me, who is popular among female single adventurers and receptionists after I made a ton of money? You usually never cared about the mood and did

whatever you please. Why are you so bothered about it now? Yesterday, I said that I won't be helping. I don't want to have anything to do with Axis Cultists. You should ask Megumin or Darkness instead."

"I begged Darkness many times, but she says she is busy with lordship duties. Megumin says she is meeting someone today, so she cannot play with me."

Aqua said as she brought the ice bucket over to me...

"Hey, what are you doing with that? I won't go. The weather is too hot to be running around outside today. Stop it! What are you doing to my blanket? I just dry it in the sun, don't wet it! I won't forgive you if you wet... Fine, I'll go, so put down that bucket!"

—It was a small building in the suburbs of Axel.

"Here we are. It looked like a very small church, but this accentuates the humility of the Axis Cultists. It feels very nice."

"This church feels like it will collapse if the wind blows."

Aqua and I arrived at this city's Axis Cult Church.

By the way, this was the first time I came here after living in this city for so long.

"What is the person in charge of this church like? He isn't someone with an intense personality, right? We have too many people with awfully strong personalities. If it turns out to be some weirdo, I'm leaving."

"Everyone in Axis Cult are good people. Don't worry. But I

have never met the person in charge of the church in this city. It seems there's a new person taking up the post recently..."

Aqua said and placed her hands on the door of the church...

"See. No problem, right? Verify it... Seriously. Next time, don't let me deal with these kind of goods."

Hearing the man's voice from inside, she stopped her hand.

These kind of goods?

"... Certainly. I was right to find you. This is definitely a first grade item. Anyhow, there is nothing to worry about, once I got used to it, there wasn't any danger. Either way, it's for my personal enjoyment only."

Hearing the woman's response, I shared a look with Aqua.

"It's best that way. Even so, don't overdo it in your enjoyment. It has caused deaths every year, so be careful."

This was a serious matter.

To think that Axis Cult would be involved with banned items...!

But why is there no criminal sense about this?

"Hey, Aqua. Let's go to the police station."

"Wa-Wait!? My children are not criminals! There must be a misunderstanding. Don't be reckless before we find out what's happening!"

“Your cultists’ provocation and sexual harassment of Eris Cultists already constitute crimes.”

It was not wise to remain here.

If the other party discovered that we overheard the conversation, they might attempt to silence us.

As I was about to leave with the unwilling Aqua...

“Seriously. You never change. You really like this white powder so much?”

—That was Megumin’s voice.

Aqua and I were shocked upon hearing the voice of someone familiar.

Why is Megumin in this place?

She just said white powder?

No. Wait. If Megumin was involved in this dirty transaction, that meant...

“Is this really that good? I remembered you recommended it to me before. I want to try it out too.”

Hey, hey.

“Little girl. This looks like ordinary white powder, but if you add hot water...”

Hey, wait, stop.

The one speaking was definitely Megumin, right?

It couldn’t be someone else with a similar voice, right?

As Aqua and I were hesitating whether to rush in or not, we heard a deciding statement.

“In that case, why don’t you try it? No problem, Megumin. Everyone is a bit afraid the first time. But after you try it once, you will be addicted...”

I kicked down the door and rushed in.

Part 2

“—This is it, you evil cultists!! What are you doing to my companion? Do you want to die?!”

Inside the building, a man and a woman stared in surprise as I kicked down the door.

And—

“Ka-Kazuma? Why are you here...! Even Aqua is...!”

Standing between the two of them, Megumin was shocked.

“Who cares why! Stop right there, criminal scum! I’m a famous adventurer in this city. If you resist, don’t blame me if you get hurt!!”

Hearing my threat, that woman...

Shivered with the white powder in her hands. She looked like a priestess of the Axis Cult.

“Wa-Wait! Although this is a banned item, but it’s for my personal use only...”

“Who would believe that nonsense! You were just trying to entice my companion! Stop joking. How are you going to compensate if my companion becomes even weirder after using that thing?! I will use Tinder and burn those damn things away!”

As I raised my right hand, that priestess hurriedly held that powder to her chest.

At this time, Aqua rushed pass me.

“God Blow!!”

She attacked the confused man with her fist.

Aqua’s fist accurately hit his belly and the man collapsed without a word.

“Wait. What are you two doing!? Why did you suddenly barge in!?”

I ignored the confused Megumin and clenched my fist at the priestess.

“Megumin, shut up! Hey, you evil priestess who attempted to entice an innocent girl into misdeeds! I’m someone who supports gender equality, so I would raise my hand even against a woman with a sacred job. As retribution for enticing my companion to play with this weird thing, I will let you feel my sacred fist on behalf of a goddess who couldn’t set a good example for her worshippers.”

“Hey, Kazuma. Don’t be so quick to judge! This kid must have some mitigating circumstances! This man here probably isn’t an Axis Cultist, so I passed judgment, but I can sense the aura of an Axis Cultist from her! I think we should let her explain first!!”

Aqua got in the way as I was about to pounce at her with my fist.

Looking at Aqua, the priestess widened her eyes.

“You are!? ... Ah, for such a thing to happen... Haha. I mustn’t be rude. Fine, I lose. If you want to burn this or hand me over to the police, do as you wish...”

“O-Onee-san!?”

Upon seeing Aqua, the priestess confessed her crimes and shrugged.

At her side, the bewildered Megumin looked at me and the priestess.

“If you surrender, we won’t do anything to you. But please cooperate with the police. Pay for your crime there.”

“Okay. I know... Haha. Megumin, are you still willing to call me Onee-san? But don’t worry. After I pay for my crime, we will meet again... Yes, probably around this evening...”

The priestess said with a weak smile...

“... This evening? What are you saying? Why would your release be so soon?”

“What are you saying? Illegal possession of Tokoroten Slime would at most be punished with a lecture for about an hour.”

Tokoroten Slime.

“... What is that slime? Is it poison or a drug that makes you high...”

“Nothing like that. It isn’t so dangerous. Tokoroten Slime is easily swallowed and feels elastic in the mouth. It’s a popular food among kids and old people.”

Hearing Megumin’s explanation, I became silent.

“... But, from the conversation earlier, didn’t some people die from this every year...”

“Because of the food’s nature, a lot of people swallow without

chewing properly, so some choked to death every year. I heard this was the favorite thing for wives to give to their mother-in-laws.”

.....

“No, but isn’t it a banned item? And the white powder? Possession itself is a crime, right?”

The priestess nodded with a sorrowful expression.

“Previously in Alcanretia, the demon king’s army used Tokoroten Slime as part of a terrorist attack... It involved turning all the hot springs in the city to Tokoroten Slime. After that, the nation decreed that Tokoroten Slime must have dangerous side effects for the demon king’s army to use it, so they started an investigation... In the end, the law banned the consumption of Tokoroten Slime before the investigation could confirm that it is safe to use.”

Why would the demon king’s army do something so ridiculous?

“But to me, Tokoroten Slime is irreplaceable! So even though I know I would be lectured, I still do it...!”

The priestess cried as I considered leaving.

Aqua rested her hand on the priestess’ shoulder.

“You, devout Axis Cultist... Remember the seventh doctrine of Axis Cult.”

The priestess lifted her head as Aqua patted her shoulder.

“The seventh doctrine...? ...! ‘You shall not endure. Drink when you want to drink. Eat when you want to eat. Because you might not get to eat it tomorrow...’”

“That’s right. You shall not endure. Even if it’s a fried chicken in someone else’s bowl, eat it if you want to eat. If you want to eat Tokoroten Slime, do not hold yourself back. After all, holding it back is not good for the body.”

“Ah... Aqua-sama, thank you...!!”

I distanced myself from the strange behavior of Aqua and the priestess. I went next to Megumin and whispered in her ear.

“Hey, what should we do? Should we stop them? Or is it better not to get involved?”

“If you are asking that, it’s definitely better not to get involved. If you leave it alone, it would probably stop naturally by itself... Anyway, why are you here? Aqua said she wanted me to accompany her somewhere this morning. Was this the place?”

Part 3

—I watched over the unconscious seller until he woke up and left.

I ignored Aqua who was still acting strange, and explained the matter.

“... So you thought I was being enticed by weirdos into misdeeds and charged in?”

“Yes. I’m sorry. You are familiar with that priestess onee-san, right? I have caused you trouble because of the misunderstanding.”

As I scratched my head and apologized, Megumin smiled and said.

“It’s nothing. After all, you were so worried about me, huh? I remember it was ‘—This is it, you evil cultists!! What are you doing to my companion? Do you want to die?!’, right? Haha. I got another Kazuma’s quote to remember.”

“Do-Don’t. Forget it. I was too anxious then... Hey, stop giving me that cheeky look, or I’ll pull on your face. Hey.”

Even with my threat, Megumin continued to look happy.

... Since there wasn’t any serious matter...

“Ah—!”

At this time, a sharp cry echoed in the church, breaking the peaceful mood.

It was the voice of the priestess who was being consoled by Aqua until now.

“What is happening? What is with this person! To make Megumin smile so coyly! Megumin even has that tsundere slutty look! Ah. Megumin is still so cute. Can I hug you!?”

“Pl-Please don’t. Anyway, I haven’t introduce you all to this onee-san, right?”

Megumin pushed the restless priestess away with both hands and said to us.

“Kazuma, Aqua. Let me introduce. This is Cecily-san. She is the manager of this church. Uh, her relationship with me is...”

“Older sister.”

“Please don’t invent fictitious relationships! Uh, I should say she took care of me previously...”

What was with this Cecily onee-san?

She was very pretty, but I could sense an aura of uselessness from her like my companions.

Cecily bowed her head to Aqua and said.

“Let me formally introduce myself... Pleased to meet you, Aqua-sama. I heard about you from our church’s highest ranking official Lord Zesta. My name is Cecily. If I can be of use in any way, please let me know.”

Cecily said and smiled gently as if facing her lover.

“Oh. You would do anything? There’s a hole in my sock. You would buy me a new pair?”



“Of course, Aqua-sama! I’ll naturally serve you and help you wear the socks... Ah. What are you doing? Even though I’m pretty, it’s wrong for you to do such things!”

I dragged Cecily, who was saying stupid things, to a corner of the church.

“Hey, she will get carried away if you dote on her too much. By the way, why are you so devoted to Aqua whom you only just met... Has the Axis Cult realized her true identity?”

“I don’t know what you are talking about. Aqua-sama is Aqua-sama. She is the arch priest who saved our city. She is the arch priest who is named after our goddess. She merely shares the name of our goddess. I came to this city to serve Aqua-sama and rely on her brilliance to spend my days leisurely.”

“Can you please return to Alcanretia?”

But I still sensed it from her reaction.

The Axis Cult probably knew about Aqua’s real identity.

And they did not intend to declare the advent of the goddess Aqua, choosing to observe silently.

At least they did not intend to harm Aqua and I.

... At this time, Aqua somehow came over to my side and pulled on my sleeve.

She glanced at me as if she wanted to say something and was expecting something.

What? Was she embarrassed to say it herself, so she wanted

me to ask Cecily to host Aqua Festival? So troublesome.

“Uh, you are Megumin’s acquaintance, Cecily-san, right?”

“Don’t be so formal. You can be more casual. You can call me Cecily-Nee.”

What should I do? Looking at her, it felt as if there were two Aquas now.

At the side, Aqua’s eyes were sparking and silently urging me on. It was annoying.

“... Uh, you know, actually this city would host Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival soon—”

“I know! Of course, I know! Those damn Eris Cultists plan to leave our Aqua-sama in the lurch with this ridiculous Eris Festival!”

Cecily interrupted me indignantly.

“It is the summer season. What will you think of in summer? Yes, of course it is the sea, the pool, and the Axis Cult. Then, what will you associate with celebration? Of course it is Axis Cult. We love banquet, celebration, and summer. To leave Axis Cult aside and host Eris Festival during summer is practically provoking us. That’s right. This is war. There is no choice but war!”

Were there only these kinds of people in Axis Cult?

Aqua was moved instantly by Cecily’s words. Her eyes were aglow.

“Therefore, I will divide up the roles. I will smash the windows of Eris Church. Megumin will declare herself coolly and get rid of the angry Eris Cultists who would be chasing me. You will

sneak into the crowd and mutter, 'Divine retribution had befallen on those evil Eris Cultists...' and other such meaningful statements. Aqua-sama will just relax here and drink some wine... Then, let's do this!!"

"I won't let you do this. There are too many things to complain about this!! ... You people don't give me the look as if you really want to try it out!"

Ignoring Megumin, who was giggling over her imagined activity, and Aqua, who was happily drinking wine according to Cecily's plan— I must first deal with this Axis Cultist.

"I don't mean that. Uh, I feel that you can start hosting something like Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival celebration as a resistance."

Part 4

“Pleased to meet you. I’m Cecily, the manager of Axis Cult’s Axel branch. I have something I need to discuss.”

“Please leave.”

In Axel’s shopping district.

The shop owners of various shops there were preparing for Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival.

“What is this? I was being so polite. What are you dissatisfied with!? ...Ha. It seems you intend to reject me first then blackmail me later. You are going say this, right— ‘Hahaha. Pretty priestess of Axis Cult, if you want me to grant your request, then show me some sincerity.’ And then, you will do that to my voluptuous body...! I won’t let you pagans have your ways. I’ll show you the power of an Axis Cultist!”

“What a crazy woman! This is why I refuse to have dealings with Axis Cultists. Stop, wait! Someone help!”

The man in charge of the shopping street committee was being strangled by Cecily before my eyes.

“... Hey, Megumin. She is your friend, right? Go and stop her.”

“Not a friend, just an acquaintance. Please don’t confuse that.”

We were here only to get the permit for celebration. Why did disputes happen whenever there was an Axis Cultist around?

I left Aqua back in the church because I thought that bringing

two problem kids would completely stall the negotiation, but it seemed just one alone didn't make much difference.

Megumin and I looked at the scene in the shopping street again.

The shop owners of various shops were very busy, preparing to set up stalls or shelters.

This scene reminded me of Japan's cultural festival.

I was sent to this world right after the end of the cultural festival.

I didn't go to school during the day of the cultural festival, but if I knew I would be coming to this parallel world, I would still feel regret about not going to the festival for one last time.

My class seemed to be setting up a yakisoba stall.

Cecily was still strangling and scolding the chairman.

... These Axis Cultists were just trying to host their own festivals, right?

Feeling nostalgic about Japan, I came over to the chairman and stopped Cecily from choking him.

I came with them to the shopping street, but seeing this scene, my thoughts changed slightly.

"Cecily-san. If it is like this, things cannot go on. Go and take a rest. I will persuade him for you."

Hearing this, Cecily let go. The chairman coughed and said.

"You said you will persuade me on her behalf, but no matter

who... Hm? Are you that Billionaire Adventurer, Satou Kazuma-san?"

So I was nicknamed as the Billionaire Adventurer. It wasn't bad.

Seeing that the chairman was willing to listen, Cecily became calm. She carefully tidied up her attire and placed her hands together as if in prayer, looking at the chairman in the eyes.

"Actually, regarding this year's Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival. We wish to change it to Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival..."

"Please leave."

"...! ...Ugh!"

"If you are like this, the negotiation cannot go on. Onee-san, please come here! Let's go and play!"

Megumin took Cecily away as the latter prepared to pounce again. I said to the frightened chairman softly.

"My companion has caused you trouble. Sorry about that... But our purpose here is related to what she said."

"The Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival mentioned by that Axis Cultist? Impossible. If we do that, I don't know what the Eris Cultists would say..."

I lowered my voice and whispered to the chairman, who was unwilling to negotiate.

"No. Unlike that Axis Cultist, I'm not making an unreasonable suggestion like changing the festival. I wish to host both together at the same time. Make it into Goddesses Eris And Aqua Thanksgiving Festival. Everyone would be satisfied with

that.”

The chairman listened and looked puzzled.

“That wouldn’t be permitted. It sounds like a disaster waiting to happen. And it doesn’t seem like there’s any benefit...”

I pretended to have an epiphany.

“Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival was supported by the shopping street stalls every year, so the annual income must be good, right?”

I asked in a casual tone.

“Uh, I would be lying if I say there’s no profit. But lately, due to the demon king’s army becoming more active, it wasn’t as grand as before... So what about it?”

I see. I see.

“Eris Cultists and Axis Cultists. Their relationship is not very good— but it is merely the Axis Cult alone which show hostility— If the festival is co-hosted by both cults, what would happen? Since Axis Cultists love celebrations, they would compete with Eris Cult and make the celebration get into full swing. Then, Eris Cult would not sit by and do nothing.”

“... Please elaborate.”

I said to the chairman who was seriously listening now.

“Let them compete with each other. The more aggressive their competition is, the grander the celebration will become. Naturally, the shopping street would benefit and increase profits.”

The chairman bowed down and stroked his chin, thinking about it seriously.

But the benefit was not just these.

“... Another thing. Where do the annual funds for the festival come from?”

“Funds? Most of it come from the donations of Eris Cult. The remaining come from various aristocrats and our shopping street fund-raising...”

I also bowed down like the chairman.

“Isn’t it great to let the Axis Cult, which wanted to co-host the celebrations, contribute to the funds? This way, perhaps just Eris Cult and Axis Cult together would raise enough funds.”

“... Do it then. Please do it this way! Wow. That’s our young and wealthy Kazuma-san for you. I wish you will be our advisor for this celebration event... Of course, you will be compensated...”

Oh. This was truly an unexpected development.

Although I no longer lacked money, there was no reason to miss out on such a good deal.

“If you don’t mind, I’ll be the advisor. I have a lot of good ideas. Let’s make a profit out of this.”

“Haha. This is really a good deal!”

We suddenly laughed out loud. Among the people watching—

“Is it really okay to leave it to him?”

“Even I, your onee-san, feels somewhat uneasy.”

Such whisperings were heard.

Part 5

In the café that recently became my meeting place with Chris, I reported to her the events so far.

“—And that was how it went.”

“Why!? Why did it become like this!? I thought it would never be approved. How did senpai convince the shopping street chairman!?”

Chris shouted, slammed the table, and stood up.

“Well, convincing the chairman took some effort, but it ended in a success.”

“So it was you—!”

Chris tearfully pestered me as I nodded and crossed my arms as if I did a good thing.

“Why!? You are so afraid of trouble, so why did you make things so troublesome!? In this case, I have no choice but to leave aside my own festival to help out with senpai’s festival! This is just crazy!”

“No, no. Why is it a given that you will help her? You should just reject her outright.”

Chris became troubled.

“That’s true... But whenever senpai asks for help, I would naturally do it... Like cleaning up the mess after your resurrection. Somehow, that became part of my job too...”

“Ab-About that... Thanks for taking care of me then... But calm down. There are good reasons for this.”

I explained to Chris, who was unable to calm down, the conversation I had with the chairman, leaving out the parts about being an advisor and its reward.

“That’s roughly what it is like. Because of the problem with the demon king’s army, the populace couldn’t get excited about the festival. So I proposed co-hosting it with the party-loving Axis Cultists. This is to let the people forget about the demon king’s army and fully enjoy the festival.”

“If you put it like that, I can’t object... but are you really the kind of person to think of the citizens?”

“Hey, what are you saying? I’m the kind person who not only defeated countless strong enemies. I’m even helping you to find divine relics.”

“So-So-Sorry!? I-I didn’t mean it that way...! Hm. I understand. That should be fine. Senpai probably won’t be too outrageous... right?”

“... Leave that be for now. Co-hosting is merely a one-time experiment. Given Aqua’s personality, just hosting it once should be enough to satisfy her. It should be back to normal next year.”

“Hey, why didn’t you answer about her being outrageous!? Is it re-really okay? ... And would my celebration be cancelled next year because the Axis Cult’s festival is grander? ... No. I- It’s not like I want to be honored in a festival, okay?”

Chris was worried about the festival next year, saying troublesome things like Aqua.

Were all the goddesses like this?

“Let’s leave this for now. The important thing is... Have you found the divine relic yet?”

“Yes. I found the location. But it’s being kept in a rather difficult place. The current owner is a noble named Undine. This person has a hobby of collecting strange items.”

A noble who collects strange items.

Because all the nobles I met so far were like that, my impression of nobles in general was set in stone.

“If the other party is a noble, maybe we could ask Darkness for help? Use the authority of Darkness’ family to make things easier...”

“No way. Undine probably used illegal methods to acquire this divine relic, so he would definitely deny it. He is a noble known for using unscrupulous methods to get what he wants. Even if Darkness negotiates with him, he would end it with a simple ‘I don’t know such a thing exists.’”

Truly, the nobles in my mind were all rotten.

I didn’t know whether the so-called illegal method was blackmail or theft.

But if he was like that, then we could use illegal methods ourselves.

“Then, it’s going be that, Big Boss.”

“Yes. It will be that. Assistant-kun.”

It seemed that mask would be used again.

Part 6

—After scouting out the noble's mansion, I was thinking about how to infiltrate inside as I returned to home.

Aqua, who came back first, was making a scene at home.

“Darkness! Please. When Kazuma returns, I will help you to lecture him! So please come out of the toilet! If you stay in there, I'll be troubled! The toilet on the second floor was jammed because someone didn't clean it properly! I beg you, come out quickly, come out quickly!”

Aqua was banging on the door of the first floor toilet.

It seemed Darkness locked herself inside.

“I'm back. Hey, what's going on? What's this about lecturing me?”

From the way Megumin lay on the sofa in the guest hall, she seemed to have used Explosion magic in Aqua's company.

“Hey, you damn NEET! It's your fault for spreading Darkness' shameful secrets. Darkness was crying when she returned! 'Lalatina ojou-sama, is it true your abs have six packs?', 'Lalatina ojou-sama, is it true your groom ran away?', 'Lalatina ojou-sama is so pretty, so even if she's a used woman, men would still want her.', and such. She said that every adventurer she met said such things! I say, come out quickly, Darkness. You can definitely find a new groom! I won't call you a used woman anymore! Please don't be angry!”

Aqua, who couldn't read the mood, shouted such things,

uncertain whether she was trying to persuade Darkness to come out or continue to stay in the toilet.

“Hey, Darkness. You are causing trouble for everyone, so come out quickly. Anyway, when I infiltrated into Dustiness mansion and said I will reveal your shameful secrets, you replied that I could do whatever I want. But never mind. Consider it my fault, Lalatina.”

The toilet door resounded with a bang as if something just pounded on it.

Lalatina had stopped crying and was currently angry.

She did not respond to Aqua’s shouts. She ignored me for some time.

But if she continued to stay in the toilet, it would be very troublesome.

“I know I’m at fault, but you have a share of it too. It takes two hands to clap. I apologize, okay? Let’s make up... I can find a random place to solve it, so it’s not a big problem. But if you don’t come out, Aqua will be in trouble. Don’t be angry anymore.”

“A goddess doesn’t use the toilet, so there’s no trouble! The toilet on the first floor is my responsibility! If Darkness doesn’t come out, I can’t clean it! No other reason! So come out already!”

Aqua shouted uncomfortably.

I felt like letting Aqua hold it in for a while, but I remembered it was my responsibility to clean the second floor toilet.

If Aqua pestered me on this point, it would be bothersome, so I gave Darkness my ultimatum.

“Hey, Darkness. We knew each other for some time now, so you should understand me. If you don’t come out of the toilet, I will make you cry and beg me to stop.”

A chuckle was heard from inside the toilet.

Darkness, who was silent so far, said.

“You too. After knowing me so long, you should know that most things could become pleasurable to me. Are you going to attack with vicious words? I control the toilet. No matter what you say, if I cover my ears and endure it, you will be the one who is disadvantaged. Dustiness clan has always been good at enduring things... Let’s compete for endurance! I will stay here until you apologize and say, ‘Lady Dustiness, please forgive me!’”

.....

Hearing this, I moved the heavy table in the guest hall to block the toilet door.

The toilet was located in the corridor next to the guest hall.

The table was as wide as the corridor, so it completely blocked the door.

I whispered something to Aqua and left the area.

Aqua watched me leave and shouted to the door.

“Hey, Darkness. Kazuma said he is going to ransack your room and satisfy his desire on your bed, then he left.”

The loud sound of someone collapsing was heard inside the toilet.

Then as if she was trying to open the door, there was a sound

of the door hitting the table.

I ignored these noises and climbed the stairs to the second floor...

Behind me, there was repeated sounds of the door slamming against the table. Darkness yelled at me.

“Kazuma! Stop! Stop, you despicable man! Hey, stop! St...! You are joking, right? Aqua, Kazuma is actually still there, right? Megumin, Kazuma is still outside, right?”

Darkness’ voice became uneasy and sounded tearful.

Megumin was resting on the sofa in exhaustion, yet she was still caressing Emperor Zell, currently sleeping in Vanir’s empty shell. Both Megumin and Aqua replied.

“Not here.” X2

“Kazuma, I was wrong! I was wrong...! Hey, let me out. I can’t come out! Aqua, Megumin, let me out! Kazuma, I’m sorry, I apologize! Sorry! Please forgive me, Kazuma-sama!”

—A while later.

“... Ugh. My favorite underwear has been...”

“... Uh, what happened to Darkness after that?”

We were eating dinner together and discussing our future plans.

“If you want to know, ask Darkness for details. Aqua, I got the festival permit for you, but can you settle the rest?”

“Of course. Once I got the permit, there won’t be any problem. Leave the rest to me. I have my own plans.”

Since I got the permit from the shopping street chairman, I would dump everything else on Aqua.

I still felt a bit uneasy, but since I wasn't an Axis Cultist, there was no need for me to get involved.

My goal was to make the festival grander by letting Eris Cult and Axis Cult compete with each other.

I had fanned the enthusiasm to this point, so they could motivate themselves after this.

Fight... Fight hard...!

"Hey, Kazuma. How did you get the festival permit?"

"Fig... Oh, the shopping street chairman said letting Eris Cult and Axis Cult co-host the festival would make it grander than before."

"The permit was really granted, huh? How did... No. It was you after all. You must have used some underhanded methods, so I won't inquire further. Ah. Why did this happen when I'm acting as lord..."

Darkness said and sighed, eating her pasta.

"Hm... This pasta is tasty. Or rather, today's food is good. Although it isn't up to the standard of my house's chef, it is good enough to sell in shops. Who cooked the dishes today?"

"Me... Oh right. You probably didn't know because you were in the mess with the previous lord at that time. I learned cooking. You see, I won't have to worry about money now, so I'm thinking of living casually from now on. Compared to skills that are useful only while adventuring, aren't these skills that can improve lifestyle much better?"

Darkness said with a pained expression.

“Yo-You... When you were learning escape skill, I already had a bad premonition. What are you trying to become? ... Usually, only chefs would learn cooking skill.”

Even if you said that—

Part 7

Thereafter, Aqua went to Axis Cult Church daily to prepare for the festival. The days were peaceful for some time.

Then, on a certain peaceful night.

Late at night, the day would break in a few hours.

Chris and I stood before our target, Undine's mansion.

"Assistant-kun, why did you choose this time? Wouldn't a bit earlier be better?"

"People tend to be deep in sleep during this time. When a person just falls asleep, a bit of noise can wake him up. When living with my family at home, this is the best time to sneak downstairs for snacks. This is the wisdom I gained from my lifestyle."

At the moment, we were not Kazuma and Chris, but the Silver Hair Thieving Band's assistant-kun and Big Boss.

Wearing that mask and black clothes, I carried a large sack on my back.

The weather was good today with an overcast sky.

Without starlight or moonlight, the surrounding was cloaked in darkness.

"I don't want to criticize you anymore... Then, what are you carrying? What's inside the sack?"

Chris was somewhat interested in the thing on my back.

I was carrying the material to absorb sound of crashing objects.

It was the bubble wrap I created through experiments.

The first prototype was ruined by a certain girl who was sick in the head, but I made the second and third prototypes after that.

After all, we were after a suit of armor.

If we carried it off directly, it would cause enough noise to wake people up.

After hearing my explanation, Chris widened her eyes in admiration.

“I see.. Assistant-kun, this bubble wrap is available in Japan, right? The one you pinch for fun... I say, can I—”

“No, you can’t pinch it. It’s very troublesome to make. Let’s hurry.”

—We went to the mansion while it was still dark.

Actually, the difficulty was not high this time.

It was far easier than infiltrating the royal palace. And although Undine was a noble, his family was not famous like Darkness’ family.

The mansion’s front gate had no overnight sentry. It may not even have patrols inside.

I used the night vision of Farsight skill and flatten myself against the mansion wall.

“I have been wondering about it for some time. Big Boss, you

are a goddess too. Don't you have night vision like Aqua?"

"This body is merely a disguise for use in the mortal world. Because I didn't descend directly into the mortal world, I cannot sense demons, undead, and evil. But by the same token, I won't emit divine aura that attracts undead."

I see, but at times like this, it could be somewhat inconvenient.

"Then, Big Boss, hold my hand. I will lead the way."

"Assistant-kun. There's no need to hold hands. When we infiltrated the palace, I could follow without any problem you know?"

"What are you saying? There was moonlight then, but there isn't even starlight tonight. An accident here could be fatal. Don't underestimate this place just because it is easier to infiltrate than the palace. Come, give me your hand..."

"Satou Kazuma-san, you will receive divine retribution if you sexually harass me, okay? For example, the toilet will be occupied just when your stomach suddenly becomes uncomfortable. Then when you finally managed to get in, you will find that there is no more toilet paper."

"I got carried away. Please forgive me."

This was different from Aqua's subtle divine retribution. Eris' divine retribution was no joking matter.

I trembled as I moved along the walls to reach the back gate.

"Let's enter boldly today. There is nobody around anyway. We could do it easily with Detect Trap skill and Open Lock skill. The important issue is after we find the armor. I don't know how effective the bubble wrap is in reducing the noise..."

“I will put my trust in Assistant-kun’s creation. In the worst case scenario, we could break through forcefully like we did in the royal palace!”

As if she remembered the infiltration back then, Chris smiled happily as she opened the lock.

Now that I thought of it, it was a rather happy time.

At that time, for some reasons, the tension was exceptionally high.

“By the way, Assistant-kun’s mask is really cool. You said you bought it from the magic tool shop in this city, right? I’m quite interested in that masked doll on the sofa in your mansion. After our work is done, bring me to visit that shop.”

“No problem... But, Big Boss, won’t you argue with the shop assistant? The shop assistant there has a bad relationship with Aqua. They argue every time they meet.”

“I won’t argue. Senpai is always like that. She argues with everyone...”

By the way, she said Chris was a disguise. If Vanir met Chris, could he see through her real identity?

It seemed Chris could not use the powers of a goddess in this form. Perhaps they wouldn’t realize each other’s nature even after meeting.

... No, no, no. If they accidentally realized their real identities, they might get in a fight that would cause unnecessary trouble. It would be better not to let them meet...

“Okay, it’s open. Let’s go, Assistant-kun.”

Part 8

As expected, there was no patrol in Undine's mansion.

After all, the crime rate of this city was lower than elsewhere. That was probably one of the reasons.

I led the way in the dark corridor.

We moved in the direction indicated by Chris' Find Treasure skill, but...

"Big Boss. Can you not stop every time we find some treasure? Let's get the divine relic and go home to sleep."

"Ugh. Yes, I understand. But how should I put this? Whenever I see treasure, my thief's blood begins to boil... When I consider that an item like this could help a lot of poor children, my hand just..."

Whenever we came across paintings or ornaments along the way, Chris would stop moving.

"Can you please be the chivalrous thief when I'm not around? Besides, there's definitely more expensive and less bulky items in the vault."

"That's true. Assistant-kun, you are quite familiar with the art of theft... You gained quite a few levels, so you must be near the level to change job, right? Change job to be a thief."

"My next goal is to live a decadent life, so it's better to be an adventurer who is weak, but capable of learning different skills. Next, I want to learn to Create Earth Golem skill. I'm wondering if I could use that skill to create a golem to do housework."

“... You sure like to waste magic and skill points on weird things. Speaking as a goddess, I wish you would learn some proper skills to prepare to fight the demon king...”

What were you saying to the person in this world with the highest death record?

—With the help of Chris’ Find Treasure skill, we finally arrived at a thick door.

At this time, my Detect Trap skill, which was seldom used, responded.

“There seems to be a trap here. Let me see... Oh. It’s an alarm trap... I say, Assistant-kun.”

“I’m not stupid. I won’t repeat the same mistake I made in the palace... Rea-Really. Don’t look at me like that...”

As Chris disarmed the trap, I used Detect Enemy skill to see if there was anyone nearby.

“.....?”

Not an enemy.

It wasn’t an enemy, but there was a subtle presence in the treasure vault.

And it wasn’t the presence of a human or a monster.

“Okay, trap disarmed! The lock has also been opened, Assistant-kun!”

Chris said and put her hand on the door.

“Ah. Wa-Wait, Big Boss. Inside—”

Before I could tell her about the mysterious presence, she opened the door.

“...? What is it, Assistant-kun?”

“Eh?”

There was nobody in the treasure vault.

This could be a delusion, but I still sensed the presence inside.

And there was a mountain worth of strange items and treasure...

“Assistant-kun! Assistant-kun, look! This is a very expensive item!”

“Oh, Big Boss. You are cheating. I saw that first!”

I completely forgot about that presence and indulged in sorting the treasure.

“I’ll say it in advance. The treasure we steal must be donated away, okay? Even if the other party is evil, we should not steal for our own gain...”

“Shh. What is this super shiny thing? It seems to be worth a good price! Oh, what is this strangely shaped stone? I remember Aqua is collecting strange stones. Let’s bring it back as present for her.”

“... I say, Assistant-kun, are you listening? We can’t do that, okay? Really cannot, okay?”

At this time, I suddenly noticed.

I noticed that although there was a lot of expensive items in

this room, the most important armor was missing.

“Big Boss, I don’t see anything like a divine relic.”

“Eh!? Uh, that’s true. But there’s a sense of divine relic. Why is it not here?”

I became interested in the presence I felt earlier and looked in that direction.

In that direction was a wall. There was nothing unnatural there...

“Ugh!?”

As I touched along the wall, a portion of it sunk. As if we were in a ninja’s house, the wall swung open.

“A secret door. Not bad, Assistant-kun.”

“After all, I’m confident my luck is second only to Big Boss’ luck.”

Carefully, we walked into the room beyond the wall.

—In the middle of the room, there was a suit of armor chained down on all sides as if it was being sealed away.

That suit of silvery-white armor seemed like a complete work of art.

There was no joints. Its appearance was a smooth set of full-body armor.

Even for someone like me who isn’t familiar with armor, my heart raced as I looked at that suit of armor. The armor gave a sense of invincibility in terms of equipment.

“This is...”

“This is the Sacred Armor Aegis... The hardest divine relic in this world that will bring its wearer victory.”

We came closer to the armor which was chained down and re-evaluated it.

“Upon closer inspection, there are damages everywhere.”

Hearing my monologue, Chris emotionally put her hand on the armor.

“... Yes. After all, this is the armor that protected its master against the demon king’s army. No matter what challenge the armor master faced, he never lost to anyone to the very end.”

She seemed to be verifying every small damage on the armor one by one.

“You were dedicated until your master died of sickness...”

Chris whispered to the armor and gently stroked it.

Ah. At this time, she really looked a goddess—

While I was thinking and looking at Chris’ profile.

“Hey, boy. Don’t touch me casually.”

A man’s voice broke the solemn mood and suddenly resounded in my mind.

Chris, who was touching the armor, probably heard the voice too.

“Uh. Bo-Boy? Is that me!? No, what is happening!? The voice

earlier was you!? Sacred Armor Aigis!?”

“Oh. What? Not a boy? Then you may touch some more. Let me introduce myself. Pleased to meet you two. My name is Sacred Armor Aigis. I’m a multi-talented divine relic that can speak and sing. You may call me Aigis-san.”

Hey, what was this talkative divine relic?

This guy was the subtle presence I felt with my Detect Enemy skill.

“Uh... I’m a bit shocked since I never heard that divine relic can speak. Therefore, Aigis—”

“I told you to call me Aigis-san, brat.”

“I’m not a brat! Besides, why is a divine relic being so arrogant!?”

“Big Boss. We didn’t infiltrate in the middle of the night to argue with an inorganic entity! Let’s complete our objective!”

I stopped Chris, who was arguing and hitting the divine relic’s chest. To complete our primary objective, I took out the luggage on my back.

Chris suddenly looked serious and put her hand on the armor’s chest.

“... Right. Aigis...san. We came here to borrow your power once more. I will help you find a new master. That person will come from a parallel world like your previous master. It will be someone from a place called Japan, a person destined to save the world!”

Chris said and smiled as if encouraging Aigis...!

“Ah? What are you saying? Why must I do such things even now? Impossible. I’m not willing. To borrow my power, it means I have to be an armor to protect the master, right? Are you stupid? Even an armor can feel pain when hit. My cool, shiny body will be damaged! By the way, what is that so-called master like? Is it someone I can accept?”

Faced with Aigis’ complaints, the smile froze on her face.

“... Uh, although I can’t promise it, the person should be full of righteousness and courage, and very gentle...”

“No, no. The personality doesn’t matter! The important thing is appearance. Appearance! Big tits? Or thin models? If it’s like that previous brat, forget it. Ah. I prefer cuties to beauties. The previous master was a swordsman, so a swordswoman would be better this time. I hope that person would wear less beneath the armor.”

.....

“I say, is this tasteless armor really that important? I think it’s better to let it sink to the bottom of the sea.”

“Assistant-kun, I understand your feelings, but this is a divine relic. Yes, I can understand your feelings, but please bear with it.”

It seemed she still wanted to bring this ridiculous armor back.

I silently brought out the bubble wrap for packing...

“Hmm? Hey, what is that guy doing? ... By the way, who are you people? Earlier, did you mention ‘infiltrate in the middle of the night’?”

Aigis asked me.

“Yes. We are infiltrators. We are going to bring you back and hand over to the master. You are a divine relic, a sacred armor, right? Then, work hard for me.”

Chris watched me work from the side as she touched the chains on Aigis’ body.

“There aren’t many girls sent here from Japan, so it may be hard to meet your requirements. But if a girl comes along, I will make you a priority for her...”

At the moment she said that.

Aigis shouted in a loud voice that echoed throughout the mansion—

“Kidnappers——!!”

I wanted to play the straight-man and scream, “You are not even human!”



Chapter 3 - Gifting This Talented Advisor With Responsibilities!

Part 1

It was terrible.

Because of the din made by Aegis, everyone in the house was awake. Chris and I were forced to leave without stealing anything.

Although I believed nobody saw us, we should still be careful since we were criminals.

I returned to the house before dawn. After running everywhere to escape, I calmed down and finally slept...

“Good morning! Hey, Kazuma! Good morning, wake up!”

... For one second and was woken up by someone.

After being interrupted as I was about to sleep, I opened the door and roared angrily.

“What do you want early in the morning! I didn’t sleep last night, so I was just about to sleep! Keep the noise down!”

This fellow usually slept until about the same time as me. She was up early today. The reason was easy to guess.

“What? Kazuma didn’t sleep? But I know why Kazuma didn’t sleep last night.”

I became nervous hearing her sudden statement.

I should not have been seen by anyone. Did she see me?

How did she even know I went to steal from another's house?

This fellow may not be a simple idiot.

“Kazuma must be too excited to sleep because of the preparatory work for the festival, right? Don't worry. This is nothing shameful. It is a festival after all!”

I was an idiot to be defensive against this fellow.

The excited Aqua opened the curtains and pushed the clothes into my hands. I was still in my pajamas.

“The preparation for the festival can wait until the afternoon. Why are we going in the morning...”

“What are you saying, Kazuma? We are adventurers, so we are going to hunt monsters!”

.....?

“Didn't you say you want to prepare for the festival?”

“This is the preparation.”

What was this fellow saying?

“Darkness and Megumin are ready! Come, Kazuma, quickly! Or we will be late!”

Late?

What was going on?

I put on my clothes and prepared my equipment—

When I opened the doors to the Adventurer's Guild, I was stunned.

"... What's going on? I have never seen so many people early in the morning."

A lot of adventurers were in front of the quest notice board.

I completely could not understand.

Not long ago, they went with me to hunt the Kowloon Hydra, a large monster with a big bounty.

Then, they should still be quite rich now.

But...

"Anyone who wants to hunt the Lesser Wyverns which nest in the mountains, please come here! We need thieves that can use Bind skill and archers that can attack flying enemies! The enemies are strong, so the reward is naturally good! There are six more slots!"

"There are a lot of bug monsters in the forest! Because of the large quantity, we need a lot of people. It's a large scale expedition involving dozens of people! No limit on job and level!"

"A lot of herbivorous monsters appeared in the plains! If they are left alone, large predators will come to feast on them, so we must exterminate them early. The guild is currently providing free support supplies! The hunt reward is also higher than usual! Please join us and make a profit!"

The guild members were moving about the sources of the announcements.

"Hey, what is going on?"

I asked Aqua out of curiosity.

“If we don’t clear the monsters nearby, the festival could not go on peacefully, so everyone is putting in the effort. Unlike the strong monsters that appeared in the winter, weak monsters are most active in the summer. The hunt rewards are also the highest in this season, so it’s a good time to make money for adventurers.”

I see.

But if there was all to it, the people who received reward for hunting the hydra could still live leisurely.

... At this time, I noticed a familiar party and walked over to them.

“Hey, you guys are here too. Forget penniless Dust, why are the rest so enthusiastic? You people should still have some money, right?”

It was Dust’s party.

Keith, who was adjusting his bow, tilted his head and said.

“I thought Kazuma would join the large scale expeditions.”

... Why?

“Yeah. It’s unusual, since Kazuma is a regular patron of that shop. In this season, male adventurers would leave other matters behind to join large scale expeditions.”

Even Dust, who was sharpening his sword, said this in an unusually serious tone.

“What? You guys are this enthusiastic about the festival?”

“Festival? Well, the female adventurers are indeed hunting monsters to let the festival happen smoothly. After all, many of the female adventurers are Eris Cultists. But we have other reasons. The men here want to join the forest monster hunts.”

Forest?

Compared to the forest, wasn't it better to hunt monsters near the city...

By the way, why was everyone so motivated? We could live leisurely.

When I was about to go back home.

The male staff, who was passing out various items to adventurers, shouted an encouragement in the noisy guild.

“Everyone, the forest monster hunt is a huge responsibility, so everyone do your best! It's up to you whether we can live peacefully during the festival this year! Please eliminate the over-populated monsters...!”

“... Uh, What has living peacefully in the summer got to do with hunting monsters?”

Hearing my question, Aqua replied.

“? Of course it is because there are too many monsters, so the citizens cannot work in the nearby forest.”

No. I know that, but this problem isn't only limited to the forest, right?”

“It's the cicada.”

Megumin said with hatred.

Cicada.

The singing insect that was symbolic of summer existed in this world too?

“Yes. If there are too many monsters in the forest, the cicada catchers could not do their work. If the worker stop, the cicadas would fly into the city. When they arrive in this city, we would be having the festival.”

Darkness said with a serious expression.

“So what? Isn’t cicadas the symbol of summer? They stay in the soil for a long time and emerge in summer to end their short lives in songs. Don’t do such unreasonable things just because it is a bit noisy. That’s human arrogance, and I don’t like it... so I’m leaving the cicadas alone. I’ll go home and sleep.”

As I turned to leave, my sleeves were pulled by Darkness and Megumin.

“I forgot Kazuma isn’t familiar with this country’s common knowledge. Listen, Kazuma. This country’s cicadas are more aggressive than normal. Japanese cicadas live for about one week, but the cicadas here, being full of life and magic power, live for about a month.”

Aqua crossed her arms and said.

Even if you said so...

“You just wanted to explain the negative aspects of cicadas, right? For example, it may pee while flying about, making the place stink. Cicadas have to pee anyway. And you said its lifespan is just one month? Leave it alone.”

Megumin and Darkness looked at each other.

As if saying, "Are you serious?"

"I say, Kazuma. There are two main differences between the Japanese cicadas and the cicadas here. Firstly, the cicada's song is very loud. Probably a few times louder than the Japanese cicadas."

That annoying song amplified a few times...

That was somewhat annoying...

"And... the cicadas sing without stopping even at night."

Super annoying!

Part 2

In the forest near the city.

“Then, frontline fighters who are confident in their defenses, please apply this oil to attract monsters. Everyone, listen. Although the enemy is a weak and small insect, the quantity is staggering. Don’t be reckless!”

The guild staff, who was leading the adventurers, said with a megaphone.

The quest this time was considered a large scale expedition.

Because there were too many monsters, a single party could not complete it, so the guild staff organized such a large group.

The staff usually would not leave the guild to come to the scene, but they would do so if a leader was needed like now.

Adventurers tended to be carefree and lack coordination. Without a guild staff, there might be internal disputes.

For example—

“As the acting lord, I will attract all the monsters! That’s right. It’s my duty to protect the citizens! Give me all the oil!”

“No. We don’t just want to attract monsters only. If you apply too much, not just the monsters, even other creatures would attack you.”

“I-I hope so!”

—This person.

“Hey, pervert. Don’t make trouble for the guild staff! You just need to defend our party members!”

“Ah! The monsters are very enthusiastic in the summer! Please, Kazuma, the request of my life...!”

I dragged Darkness away while she was troubling the staff to give her all the oil.

There were a total of more than 30 adventurers in this expedition, including us.

Most were parties consisting of four or five members.

Among them, the frontline people with powerful builds applied the oil.

Darkness also applied her portion of the oil on herself...

“... Hey, you... Didn’t you hear what the staff just said...”

Darkness seemed to have taken extra bottle of oil from the staff and was currently applying them on herself.

As response to my helpless complaint, Darkness said.

“Haha. You usually say that I’m useless, so now is the time I prove my worth. A crusader is a meat shield, so let me take on everything. You seem exceptionally motivated today. Leave the defense to me. Do your part without reservation!”

Perhaps because she hadn’t done a quest for a long time, Darkness smiled bravely and said such cool words excitedly.

“Of course. This is to let everyone in the city sleep well. I will exterminate the evil monsters and the cicadas. I’m different

today. Watch closely!”

Hearing the nature of the cicadas in this world, I finally understood why the male adventurers were so motivated.

Cicadas.

Correct. If we couldn’t sleep because of the cicada’s songs, the shop which provide people with amazing dreams would be meaningless.

And it must be endured for an entire month.

Perhaps motivated by Darkness and I—

“Both of you are very excited, but I will be the one who kills the most number of monsters. Kazuma, please watch me!”

—Megumin smiled confidently as if wanting to compete with us.

Then naturally...

“...? What is it? Why are you looking at me?”

“Eh? ...Uh, nothing. I thought you would be the first to get carried away and cause all kinds of trouble.”

I said to Aqua, who was rarely so reserved.

“You. What do you take me for? I can learn too. You people who get carried away would definitely fall during the fight... My vast wisdom has see through it all— Pride precedes a fall.”

“!?”

I couldn’t believe my ears.

Aqua, she...

Aqua, who messed up everything she did, who attracted undead even without doing anything, actually...!

Witnessing Aqua's growth, I couldn't help but cry...

"!? Wh-Why!? Hey. Why are you crying, Kazuma!?"

I stopped looking at her, who was asking worriedly. I covered my face, lowered my head, and indulged in my sentiments.

Perhaps because they didn't hear our conversation, Megumin and Darkness looked at us in puzzlement.

"Adventurers! The first wave of monsters are coming! Vast amount of insecticide have been prepared here. It's up to you, everyone!"

At this time, the staff shouted—

Insect monsters approached.

They emitted loud buzzing noises as they charged towards the people who applied the oil.

"Ugh! Wait...! There are too many. Some support please!"

A certain frontline adventurer shouted.

He was surrounded by a mob of flying rhinoceros beetles, each the size of a small dog.

Although they were only the size of a small dog, it was enough to overwhelm him.

I heard that the horn of a flying rhinoceros beetle could smash the front window of a moving car.

Then this world's rhinoceros beetles must be bad news, even if they were just living out their lives.

As I thought and watched the flying rhinoceros beetles, they went with the momentum—

As they continuously turned their bodies, their horns moved in a twisting motion and struck...

“Wah!”

An adventurer was hit hard in the belly and cried out.

I heard the sharp noise of metal being hit.

On the belly of the adventurer wearing metal armor...

“So painful! Damn. My belly has been pierced, although it is very shallow! Be careful. Weaker armors would be ruined!”

The rhinoceros beetle deeply pierced the armor of the adventurer who was screaming and crying.

They were too aggressive!

The other adventurers helped to remove the beetle from the armor.

At the same time, the wounded adventurer's body started to glow.

“Ugh...!? ...Oh. Healing magic!”

The adventurer exclaimed as his injury vanished. It must be Aqua's healing magic.

Then, the adventurers acting as meat shields started to glow one by one.

Aqua used various kinds of support magic on the adventurers everywhere.

What was up with Aqua today? Why was she suddenly so reliable...!

At the moment when I was surprised and moved.

“Take 20! I can take on 20 of them! Come on. Some more!”

In the midst of the frontline adventurers who were blocking the flying monsters, my party’s crusader attracted the most enemies and was shouting happily.

As mentioned before, Darkness was really cool and reliable today.

My companions were unexpectedly active.

Then I could not carry on like this either.

I held the insecticide provided by the guild in my hands. It was like a small water gun that was made of bamboo.

I sprayed at the insect monster flying towards me.

The other adventurers also started spraying to protect the frontline meat shields.

There were more than just rhinoceros beetles. There were also mantises and stag beetles.

And a lot of other insects. They are all huge.

Even if they were insects, they were still considered monsters.

There were wounded adventurers everywhere. Aqua was

busy healing them.

And she did this silently without bragging or complaining.

As I prepared to protect Aqua by spraying insecticide, someone pulled on my sleeve.

“Still not yet? Kazuma, is it still not time for my grand entrance!?”

Watching everyone perform actively, Megumin couldn’t wait to use Explosion magic.

I knew she wanted very much to take action, but...

“Sorry, you shouldn’t take action this time. After all, this is a forest. If you use magic, the surrounding trees would be destroyed, so you should rest today—”

“Explosion—!!”

She purposely prevented me from finishing my sentence by suddenly roaring out her magic.

At the point in mid-air above our location in the forest.

A blinding flash of light and a roaring noise occurred.

After the destructive winds passed, all that was left were Darkness and the other adventurers on the ground.

The small insect monsters couldn’t withstand the powerful shockwave and were all motionless on the ground.

There were painful groaning everywhere. It seemed only Aqua barely avoided the attack. She was desperately healing the people on the ground.

Megumin, who was lying next to me, said softly.

“I leveled.”

“You idiot!”

I got up angrily and pulled up Megumin, who was still indulging in self-satisfaction.

“Why do you do this even after I said no!? Look at this tragedy! You better apologize to everyone!”

“This is because Kazuma said I won’t get a chance to act! Besides, every adventurer in this city is already used to Explosion magic. No problem!”

The truth was exactly like what Megumin shamelessly said. The adventurers stood up as if nothing had happened, without a single word of complaint.

These people were really...

As I walked towards everyone, Darkness attempted to get up. But she was struggling since her armor was too heavy.

When she was about to stand up—

“... What’s going on? My body feels itchy.”

She tilted her head, puzzled...

I looked closely at Darkness’ armor and backed away a few steps in shock.

“Hey, you...! Armor! Ants are swarming over it!”

A large swarm of ants were surrounding Darkness who was on the ground.

It must be because she ignored the staff's instruction and applied too much monster-attracting oil.

Surrounded by ants, Darkness retreated and looked at Aqua and me.

"Ah...! Wait, Kazuma, please! It itches! They have gotten inside the armor! Create some water with magic for me...!"

Unable to scratch through the armor and unable to remove the armor easily, Darkness struggled and wailed.

I ignored her because it was too troublesome and she was just reaping what she sowed.

Finally, as if already used to the ridiculous behaviors of adventurers, the staff stood up without complaining.

"Everyone, well done. Then, the second wave should be arriving soon..."

... Second wave?

As the staff said casually, the loud buzzing noise of insects was heard.

All the insects in the trees were enraged probably because the blast and shockwave of Explosion magic shook the entire forest.

"... This is not good."

"Wah! Kazuma! I have a bad premonition!"

Aqua, who was strangely well-behaved this time, shouted with a worried expression.

The bad premonition came true. Because their homes were

destroyed, a few hundred angry insects flew over...!

“Retreat! Retreat!”

Hearing my command, the staff and the adventurers scattered.

“—Ugh... Boohoo... I worked hard this time... Even though I didn’t get carried away and worked really hard...”

On the road back with the guild staff and the other adventurers.

After being attacked by insects, Aqua was crying with her hair in a mess. I brought her along and sighed deeply.

I also carried Megumin, who was happy about killing a lot of monsters with Explosion magic, on my back.

Although the other adventurers were made to face that final danger, a lot of monsters were taken care of safely.

The rich reward was to be divided among everyone, so they were very happy too.

Then—

“Ugh... Grrr... Ha... Ha... Kazuma... Ka-Kazuma... This is a new feeling... This feeling is really refreshing...”

Darkness blushed and said these stupid words. It seemed there were still a lot of ants inside her armor. At first, she was shouting and crying about it being painful and itchy, but now she was in ecstasy.

Why did I waste all my fortune to rescue this pervert back then?

Part 3

After that, we were busy and fulfilling every day.

We hunted monsters in the morning and prepared for the festival in the afternoon.

Normally, I wouldn't be motivated to actively hunt monsters, but because of that shop... No, because of the upcoming festival, I wasn't so bored of it.

Was a hikikomori like me secretly interested in school activities like the cultural festival?

I participated in the shopping street committee almost daily and made a lot of suggestions on the basis of making this festival a success.

Another week to the festival.

“—As a means to increase sales of various stalls, I suggest every stall should make their poster girls wear swimsuit!!”

As the advisor, I slammed on the table and put forth my suggestion.

“This idea is great! Great, but! If it gets carried away, the police would intervene, right!?”

“How can anyone enjoy the festival with the fear of police intervention!? The advisor's suggestion would definitely increase sales! What kind of merchant would not do it when he knows it would be profitable?!”

“No. The chairman's concern is reasonable. If we focus only

on the present profit, we may lose the profits of the festivals in the future... Damn. If there is a proper excuse for poster girls to wear swimsuits..."

The chairman was in a dilemma.

The committee members were troubled.

I looked at them and proposed my secret plan.

"I have a plan."

Hearing this, the mood in the committee room changed.

"What!?"

"Advisor, what is this plan!?"

I looked at them and said.

"This year's festival name includes 'Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving'. That's right. The festival banner includes the name of the goddess of water."

Everyone present seemed to be sobering up.

"Since it is the festival of the goddess of water, then let the poster girls wear swimsuits to play at water fights. It won't be a problem if we say 'This costume is appropriate for playing with water'! And besides, the festival is held during the hottest time of the year. Then, this could be a way to prevent heat stroke. If the police intervenes, we can counter with 'If someone collapses because of heat stroke, will you take responsibility?' The police are not used to handling 'responsibility' so they will shut up."

"Genius! Advisor, you are practically a genius!"

“Please help out my shop after the festival!”

The sound of applause echoed in the committee room.

“—Hey, Kazuma. The festival committee submitted a ‘Heat Stroke Prevention and Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival Summary’. You are a committee member, right? Then this...”

“Yes. Because the day of the festival will be very hot. To prevent heat stroke, we decided to host water fight events everywhere. Thus, the usual clothes worn by the poster girls would be inappropriate. If they get wet from the water fights, their underwear would be exposed. Swimsuits would allow them to play without reservations. Because I didn’t have the opportunity to participate in such festivals in my country, I want to let this festival be successful...”

“I-Is that so? Sorry, I misunderstood. In that case, it’s fine. I agree. The first summer festival we spent together must be successful.”

Thus, the politically inexperienced temporary lord Darkness agreed to my plan.

—Three days to the start of the festival.

My position as the advisor was not without difficulties.

Sometimes, I would argue with the committee members.

“Detonation magic users have gone to reinforce the imperial capital against the demon king’s army. Thus, there isn’t enough firepower for this year’s fireworks display. I’m afraid we have to cancel it.”

Hearing this, I retorted.

“Idiot! We can’t cancel the fireworks display. What are you thinking? Aren’t fireworks always accompanied by people in yukatas!? What’s the point of the festival if you don’t get to see people in yukatas?”

“Advisor, please calm down! Are ‘yukatas’ referring to that which comes from a faraway country?”

“Isn’t it just a fireworks display and yukatas? What’s the big deal?”

“I understand our advisor is full of anticipation for yukatas. I heard that it is indeed conventional to wear a yukata during a fireworks display. But if there is no Detonation magic user, what can we do? I don’t know if we can find a Blast magic user...”

“Everyone should know how pathetic the fireworks are when made with Fire Ball magic...”

I looked at everyone and brought out my secret plan.

“I have a plan. One of my companions can use Explosion magic—”

“Rejected! The festival itself will be destroyed!”

“I want to retract what I said earlier about you being a genius! You are an idiot!”

“We shouldn’t have let this man be our advisor. We must be possessed previously...”

My suggestion was not effective. The committee members complained.

I grabbed the collar of the chairman next to me.

“What are you saying, you fool? You should resign as the chairman! Fireworks display is romantic! It’s a necessary event for summer! You get to watch girls in yukatas and fireworks! And nonchalantly hold their hands! There is no point to the event if there are no fireworks!”

“You damn brat! In that case, you provide a plausible suggestion! Ah, what’s with your hand? Is it really okay for an adventurer to use violence against a commoner?”

“Kill him! This upstart adventurer isn’t capable. Everyone gang up on him!”

* * *

“—‘Detonation Magic Potion Permit Application’...? Hey, Kazuma. Why do you need this thing? Isn’t it dangerous? And... why are you hurt all over?”

“This magic potion is necessary for the festival. I’m shouldering everyone’s will not to let this festival fail.”

“Uh, hm. You look so serious. I guess it must be true. I understand. Permit granted. Still— Why are you hurt?”

“A man has things that he must protect at all costs. These wounds are my proof of manhood in protecting what must absolutely be protected.”

“I-Is that so? I understand. I won’t ask further. I feel it’s better not to do so.”

I kept on convincing the indecisive Darkness and spent my days busy with preparing for the festival.

I never participated in the cultural festivals during middle

school.

This was my willfulness to make up for the school life that I missed out on.

Honestly, the reward for being an advisor was not important.

I turned my back on Darkness, who was still somewhat uneasy, and walked towards my own room.

I prayed that the festival would proceed smoothly.

From the start of the festival, there was still...

—The festival would start tomorrow. Today was the last committee meeting.

To complete my last mission as the consultant, I shared my awesome suggestions with my associates in this short time.

“In my country, there is a place called Asakusa. Every year, the festival in Asakusa includes Samba Carnival, which parades sensuous women on the streets...”

TL Note: See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asakusa>

“Stop lying. What kind of festival is that? You just made it up! You are just a horny brat!”

“Previously, you mentioned a festival whereby women sit on huge phallic objects that are carried around like sedan chairs! Such ridiculous festivals are impossible!”

TL Note: See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanamara_Matsuri

I slammed the table and retorted them vigorously.

“Everything I said is true! Don’t treat me as if I’m crying wolf!

Anyway, Eris Festival is too rustic! What is with everyone going to Eris Church to offer prayers!? Isn't there anything else to do!? For example, having both sides carry their mikoshi and oppose each other."

TL Note: Mikoshi is a divine palanquin used in festivals. See_
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikoshi>

"A festival is sacred by nature. The kind of festivals in your mind are ridiculous!"

"Making money is important, but if we do that, it feels like something important would be lost!"

"Your suggestions are too straight! It's not that there cannot be erotic elements, but can't it be a bit more subtle!?"

* * *

Then, at night.

This type of conversation with Darkness was becoming a habit...

"—Hey, Kazuma. May I have a moment of your time?"

"What is it?"

"I completely cannot understand the purpose of this 'costume parade'."

I knew she would ask this question.

"Goddess Eris will descend into this world incognito and act on her own in disguise. Have you heard of this legend?"

“Oh, yes... This is a popular legend among Eris Cultists. Thus, every year at this time, a lot of people in the city will dress up as Eris-sama so she can enjoy the festival in her true form. When the real thing is mixed up with the fakes, Eris-sama won't be so noticeable.”

Oh. I thought it was purely for cosplay, but it seemed there was a deeper reason.

“This event is to accommodate with the tradition you mentioned. It's not restricted to dressing up as Eris-sama. One can dress up as a hero, a princess, or Goddess Aqua. In my country, there is a festival called Comiket, which features all kinds of costumes.”

“I-Is it? Uh, I think I understand the purpose of this event. But... But this is a festival to praise the goddesses, so... isn't the permit to dress up as a succubus inappropriate...”

“What are you saying? This is a rare festival. It is not just the goddesses who want to relax in their true forms. Don't worry, just make an exception for this festival. It's just a few sensuous onee-sans walking the streets. It won't hurt.”

“Even if you say so... Uh? Wait. What did you just say? The way you said it sounds like there will be non-divine entities infiltrating into the city...”

“Fine, fine. Don't worry. Just stamp the seal! This is the dream of all male adventurers! And the onee-sans agreed that if this proposal is approved, they will be willing to really dress up as succubi!”

“Who are these ‘onee-sans’ you mention? By the way, why are you so persistent!? I know, I know! To think that there are women who want to dress up like that. Who are these people...”

In this manner, although it was busy and messy, the preparation for the festival proceeded smoothly.

Finally, the day came.

Part 4

“Citizens of Axel, are you ready for this long-awaited day!? I officially announce the start of Goddess Eris & Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival!”

“Woah!”

The announcement through the broadcast magic item echoed throughout the city.

At the same time, various kinds of magic were fired into the sky to celebrate the start of the festival. The ground roared with similarly loud cheers.

“It’s morning already...”

Today is the first day of the festival.

Since last night, I was playing the games brought back by Aqua from the Home of the Crimson Magic as a reward for my hard work over the past few days. I realized it was morning after hearing the announcement from outside.

I was hungry, so I went downstairs for food. I found Megumin eating breakfast alone.

“Good morning, Kazuma. Everyone got up early today, including Aqua and Darkness.”

“No. I didn’t get up early. I was playing games all night. By the way, those two are up? I don’t see them. Where did they go?”

“Aqua was too excited to sleep last night, so she went out at

dawn.”

She was like a kid who couldn’t sleep in anticipation of an excursion.

“After I told Darkness that Aqua was gone, Darkness rushed out as well, saying she wants to keep an eye on Axis Cult so they won’t do anything stupid.”

“That fellow sure is busy after becoming the temporary lord. Megumin, are you going to the festival?”

“No. I intend to visit Yunyun, who is probably about to cry over the fact that she has nobody to go to the festival with. I will walk around before her, but I won’t invite her along, so I can mess with her feelings. Kazuma, want to come along?”

“Yo-You. Just go with her to the festival. I will take a short nap until evening then I’ll visit the festive stalls.”

“I don’t think that could be considered a short nap anymore... By the way, Kazuma, are you free on the third night of the festival?”

After finishing her breakfast, Megumin said casually as she drank her tea.

“The third day? I’ll probably be roaming around, visiting the stalls, or something. Why?”

“Nothing. There’s a fireworks display on the third day. Since the festival is held in conjunction with Axis Cultists, I’m not sure if we could get to the third day safely. Then again, I can’t be sure that there will definitely be any accident... If it’s all good, do you want to watch the fireworks with me?”

Megumin said and took her tableware into the kitchen without waiting for my reply.

... There was going to be fireworks.

Going to the festival and watching fireworks with a girl.

What was this? There was a sense of enjoying one's youth!

—In the evening of the same day.

Because of the unexpected fireworks event, I couldn't sleep well. When I noticed the extraordinary bustle of the town, I got cold feet.

The crowd was the natural enemy of a shut-in.

There were a lot of people once I came close to the shopping district.

A huge banner was hanging at the entrance to Axel's shopping district. The banner displayed "Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival" in large font.

And "Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival" in small font, squeezed in along the sides.

I should visit the area managed by Axis Cult first to see the situation.

The sky was completely dark and the street lamps were lit.

The street of the shopping district was much livelier than usual, full of adventurers, commoners, and merchants— all kinds of people.

Small stalls and shops were everywhere. The entire district was engulfed in noise.

I hoped the area managed by Aqua would be as popular.

And my worry came true. There seemed to be a disturbance in the area where Aqua was to set up stalls.

Part 5

“You can’t sell these things without permit! Why do you Axis Cultists always make trouble!?”

“What do you mean by ‘these things’? This is the stall carefully planned by Aqua-sama. How dare you insult it!?”

The one arguing was Cecily.

She was arguing with the policeman who was patrolling the festival.

“Hey, what are you doing? I asked you people to get enthusiastic, not to get into an argument! You make trouble for the police the moment I take my eyes off you. Must you people always be like that?”

“Oh, good! Listen, Kazuma-san. This guy is picking on us to disrupt our business!”

“I’m not picking on anyone! It’s simply not permitted for you to sell these things!”

What were they arguing about?

I looked at the stall. There were a lot of tadpoles in a basin full of water.

“... What the heck is this?”

Those tadpoles were a bit too big.

At this time.

“Aqua-sama said that there should be goldfish scooping in a

festival. I'm not familiar with goldfish scooping, but I still did my best to recreate the scene. Since it is difficult to find wild goldfishes, I used tadpoles as a substitute..."

Cecily said and looked at me as if wanting me to help her out.

No. Why would anyone want to scoop this?

By the way, this...

"Hey, aren't these tadpoles a bit too big? Are these really tadpoles?"

As if answering my suspicion—

"In any case, it is forbidden to sell the young of Giant Toads in this place! These things will become very big in a short time! If the kids buy them, the city would be covered in Giant Toads in a few months! How will you compensate for that!"

"Hey, spray some pesticide in here quickly."

Hearing the policeman's words, I decided to get rid of these things. Cecily hurriedly stopped me.

"Stop! Don't ruin my shop! Aqua-sama said that Kazuma-san would feel nostalgic and be very happy! You should like goldfish scooping, right?!"

"Yes, I like scooping goldfish! But who would want to scoop these unlovable things? Casually releasing them would cause trouble. If you don't want them killed, take them far away! You people said I could leave it to you once the permit is granted. Now look at this!"

Cecily chuckled at my words.

"Did you think there is only one stall that the Axis Cult could

be proud of? For this festival, all the Axis Cultists in the city gathered and thought of many creative things!”

Cecily pointed in front to over 30 different stalls.

There were actually other Axis Cultists besides Cecily in this city. This reminded me of a certain organism which was said to have an entire nest present if merely one individual was seen.

There were quite a few window shoppers. It was quite lively.

I felt relieved for a moment that these people really worked hard, but I suddenly found something wrong with these stalls —

“A string of roasted kraken! This is made from a young kraken. Rare and special roasted kraken! Very delicious!”

“Hey, isn’t this just an ordinary squid? It’s no different from the taste of a squid...”

“What are you saying? Have you eaten a real kraken before? Axis Cult can guarantee that this is definitely a roasted kraken!”

There was an onee-san selling squid as the so-called kraken.

“Come and visit the Amazing Hut! Currently exhibiting the rare hybrid offspring of a fish-man and a mermaid! Caught by brave Axis Cultists... Ah! Customer, please don’t get crazy in the hut!”

“This is nonsense! Return my money, bastard! This is just a big fish inside a tank!”

“I said already. This is the hybrid offspring of a fish-man and a mermaid!”

... There was a problem with the Amazing Hut the instant a customer entered.

“Come and play the shooting game! There’s a grand prize for anyone who can hit the target between the eyes...”

“Hey, the shooting target looks like Eris-sama! Stop this blasphemy against Eris-sama!”

“Ugh. Eris Cultists attempt to disrupt us on the first day of the festival! Police! Over here! Arrest those Eris Cultists... Ah, what are you doing? I didn’t ask you over to close my shop. I want you to arrest those Eris Cultists...!”

... And someone whose shop was being closed down by the police.

Finally—

“Onee-san, is that a real dragon?”

“Yes. Of course, it’s a dragon. The Axis Cult is currently operating dragon-rearing ranches. One for only 500 eris. Come, buy one.”

And a fool, who caught a lizard from somewhere, painted it with vibrant colors, and planned to cheat kids of their money.

“Eh... 500 eris is all of my pocket money. If I buy it, I won’t be able to buy other things. No thanks. Anyway, it looks like a lizard...”

“Is it? How regrettable. But if it’s like this, these children won’t be sold. Of course, if unsold dragons cannot be simply released into the wild, since they are dangerous. I can only send them to animal shelters... But if they can’t find owners there, they would eventually be put to death...”

The kid became anxious because of that fool's lies.

"Wh-Why is it like that? Th-This is a lizard, right? Just releasing it would be fine."

"What are you saying? This is a trueborn dragon! Hey, are you buying? Is it really okay not to buy it!?"

That fool continued to pester and blackmail the kid who was about to cry.

"Ugh... Bu-But if I buy it, my pocket money will..."

"So you're not buying? Then you will definitely regret it! These poor dragons are destined to be sent to the animal shelters!"

"If you fool around further, I will send your chick to the animal shelter! How can you bully a little kid, you fool!"

I slapped Aqua on the back of her head.

Part 6

“Because you were scammed into buying the so-called dragon egg, you intend to mass produce similar victims to take revenge on society!?”

“What are you saying, Kazuma? Don’t you know!? In the special situation of a festival, a certain amount of profiteering is acceptable! Isn’t Japanese festivals like this? And Emperor Zell is a real dragon!”

I hugged my head as I dragged Aqua away from selling lizards.

I had not seen any normal stalls so far.

I should not have left it to them. Aqua and the others were too useless. It was impossible to hope for competition between the two cults.

“This isn’t ‘acceptable amount’ anymore, you fool! Look. Your area is not lively at all, and the customers are losing patience with you all! Darkness said she will be coming for inspection. If that stone head sees this tragedy, she won’t permit Axis Cult to host a festival ever again.”

Hearing this, Aqua finally understood the situation—

“Th-There! Kazuma, there’s a popular stall there! There’s definitely no tricks and it’s the most profitable stall!”

She dragged me over to a certain stall.

In the corner of the area managed by Axis Cult, there was a small stall.

This stall was unexpectedly popular.

... Upon a closer look, I was so surprised I nearly fell off my feet.

It was Chris with a darkened expression.

“I saw Chris idly strolling around, so I grabbed her to man the stall!”

What was she doing? Seriously.

Why was the goddess of Eris Cult manning a stall for Axis Cult?

Chris sat there, hugging her knees. With spiritless eyes, she waved at us.

This stall was running lotteries.

“Hey, again! Please once more!”

“Wait, let me go first! I spent a lot of money here already!”

If you drew the winning lot, you would get twice the money you bet.

This was a simple stall with no scheme. But there were an unusual amount of people, and somehow everyone was obsessed.

A male customer handed over eris coins and drew one out of the three lots in Chris’ hands.

He opened it nervously...

“Damn. Lost again! Hey, show me the other two lots!!”

Chris obeyed and opened her hands to show the other two lots.

“You win” was written on both of them.

Ah, so only one in three lots would result in a loss.

Normally, a losing rate of one in three was beneficial to the customers.

But...

“Fine. I will win this time! Since I don’t see any cheat, I should win soon!”

“I don’t sense any trace of blessing magic, so why do we always lose...? Hey, stop playing.”

“Once more! It’s fine if I don’t recover my losses. I’ll be satisfied if I win once! I won’t accept this pathetic record of not winning even once!”

The rules were obviously biased towards the customers, yet they keep losing until they were too hot-headed to leave.

It wasn’t that you were weak. Your opponent was just too strong. After all, this girl was...

“Okay. Just this time! Goddess of luck, Eris-sama! Please let me win! Or I will convert to Axis Cult!”

“Eh!? Hey. Wa-Wait!”

Hearing the man’s words, Chris panicked.

Too late. The man drew his lot...!

“All on this one lot! ... Damn it!! I hate Eris-sama the most!”

“Do-Don’t!”

After losing again, the man threw the lot away. Chris cried out in distress on the verge of tears.

“Well done, Chris. It was worth the effort to beg and coerce you into helping! You didn’t just man the stall. You even converted an Eris Cultist! Previously, I found a strangely shaped stone from the Kowloon Hydra’s lake. I will give it to you as a present.”

“I don’t want it! Ugh... My precious worshipper...”

What the heck was she doing?

Chris must be here because she couldn’t refuse Aqua’s willful request...

As the traumatized Chris lowered her head, Cecily came over after arguing with the police.

“Aqua-sama, what should we do... Now that the obsessed customers have left, even the lottery stall... We could only use the Tokoroten Slime stall recommended by me.”

“Hey, stop selling weird stuffs. I’ll think of something for you people.”

Part 7

Seriously, why did this happen?

I had no intention to work hard, but now Axis Cult could not compete with Eris Cult.

Forget about making the festival more lively. If this carried on, they would perish.

In the area managed by Eris Cult, the stalls were selling various goods at cost prices, so it was quite lively.

Choirs sang praises to Eris. Thanksgiving to Eris and “Cheers!” could be heard anywhere.

There was nothing creative, merely exhibiting the mood of a traditional festival. But looking at the Eris Cultists with their smiling devotions along with drinks and laughter, it seemed natural to host a Thanksgiving Festival to Goddess Eris...

“—Hey, Kazuma. What should I do?”

“This is the time for your Party Tricks skill. After attracting customers, you can help out. Cecily will attend to the customers. Chris can help me with the cooking.”

“Oh. I just need to attract customers? Leave it to me!”

“I just need to use my charm to receive the male customers? Leave it to me!”

“Hey, why am I still helping out!?”

I gave the orders and started to cook deftly.

A saucy scent filled the shopping district.

The guests were attracted by the scent, finally—

“Okay, next! Want more mayonnaise and seaweed, right? Hey! Aqua, cut more cabbages! I’ll give the pork to you, Chris!”

“Hey, Kazuma. Let me cut the pork! Today’s cabbages are too lively and aggressive!”

“I’m not good at handling cabbages either! Assistant-kun, let me do your job. You cut the cabbages!”

Aqua was struggling with the cabbages. Chris was complaining as she cut the pork.

“It can’t be helped then. Chris, check out my vegetable-cutting skill! ...Oh. The cabbages are especially crispy in summer. They are most tasty.”

“Uh... Yes. I like summer cabbages best. Winter cabbages are too violent. Autumn cabbages can fly, so they are very difficult to deal with...”

“Both of you are supposed to be working. Why are you eating!? This customer has waited for a long time! Big bowl of noodles with extra pork slices!”

As I cooked, the stall became popular.

The menu was the usual set meals in Japanese festivals, everyone’s favorite yakisoba.

Ever since Japanese people came to this world, all sorts of ingredients had been brought over as well.

Although ingredients for things like miso, grilling, and

hamburgers were available, there were a lot of dishes not known to people.

“This yakisoba thing is really delicious! The sauce is awesome!”

“Yes. I feel hungry just smelling it!”

“Bro, one big bowl of noodles with mayonnaise and cabbage!”

“Thanks for your patronage. I have your order! Hey, Cecily. Record the order... Stop eating the cabbages!”



The sauce for the fried noodles was probably something new to this world. Everyone was enjoying it.

Even if the people who came from Japan knew how to cook the noodles, they might not know how to mix the sauce.

I did not find curry or okonomiyaki, which required mixing various spices— This required professional knowledge to cook.

TL Note: Okonomiyaki is a Japanese pancake. See_
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okonomiyaki>

As for why I would know how to make the sauce for the yakisoba...

“I didn’t expect someone with cooking skill would open shop here. This year’s festival is really sumptuous! Looks like we can let Axis Cultists join in the festival next year as well!”

“Isn’t that chef the famous adventurer, Satou Kazuma? That guy can even cook.”

Yes. It all depended on the cooking skill I learned earlier.

This skill was meant to improve my standard of living. I didn’t think it could be used in this situation.

After all, the people who reincarnated from Japan would not learn cooking skill.

Or rather, they couldn’t learn it.

Since they reincarnated into this world with cheat items, they wouldn’t belittle themselves to take on the weakest job of adventurer.

If Eris Cult wanted to have a traditional festival, we would oppose it with a modern festival.

Perhaps because it was refreshing or creative, Cecily's idea of wrapping the yakisoba with Axis Cult Recruitment Form was well received.

Seeing this, Aqua's eyes glowed.

"Hey, Kazuma. Axis Cultists are being praised! This is something new to me!"

"Should we add Tokoroten Slime as an after-meal dessert? Sweet and soft Tokoroten Slime!"

"Hey, don't add weird banned items like Tokoroten Slime! Hahaha. How is it, Aqua? If you are serious about doing business, you can make a profit! No need for tricks. Just do it honestly is the best! ... By the way, look at this popularity. Maybe I should actually open a restaurant? Hey, hey. Although I made enough money for my entire lifetime, this scene still makes me laugh happily!"

"Hey, Assistant-kun... It seems that even the customers from the stalls managed by Eris Cultists were coming over. What am I doing..."

On this night.

Among all the Axis Cult's stalls, the only profit-making stall was this noodle stall.

Part 8

“—Then, this is today’s sales record.”

“Woah!?” X4

In the committee room where the members were gathered.

After the report on the sales record for the first day of the festival, everyone including me cried out in joy.

“It is almost twice as much as the previous year! This year’s festival is a big success!”

“Thanks to our advisor’s suggestion to let Eris Cult and Axis Cult compete with each other! Although the sales in Axis Cult’s area is not that good, it motivated Eris Cultists to be more enthusiastic.”

“Yes. I hope Axis Cult can do better, but this isn’t bad. The Axis Cult’s stall selling yakisoba is very popular. I heard it was opened late just when the festival was closing. Tomorrow, it should open earlier, so it is worth the anticipation.”

After seeing this huge result, the committee members, who always argued with me then, were smiling happily at me now.

I heard that a portion of the profits would be shared among the committee members who were involved in the festival planning.

Of course, as the advisor, I would be getting a share.

So for the committee members, it didn’t matter which cult won, as long as there was profit.

“Actually it is because Axis Cult is too useless, so I had to open a noodle stall selling my country’s food. I will work hard as the advisor tomorrow. I still have a lot of good ideas.”

“Oh!” X4

The committee members looked at me with a new sense of respect.

“That’s our Satou-san. I heard you were involved in the incident that made a lot of money for Wiz’s Magic Tool Shop. It seems that isn’t just a rumor!”

“Yes. No wonder you got so rich in such a short time!”

“It looks like the next two days will be full of anticipation!”

Ah. I got embarrassed after being praised to this extent.

I merely replicated Japanese festivals.

“Leave it to me! Satou Kazuma will work hard tomorrow!”

“Oh!!” X4

The first day of the festival ended like this.

Part 9

“... Uh, Kazuma. Do you still intend to help Axis Cult?”

The second day of Goddess Eris & Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival.

As the sky darkened, the citizens began to walk towards the shopping street.

Sleepy Darkness, with heavy eye bags, called out to me in a tired voice as I was about to leave the house.

“Yes, I do... What’s up with you? You look pale.”

Darkness turned while lying on the sofa and shut her tired eyes.

“Of course. I didn’t think that lordship duties would be so tiring... The complaints for these two days were a lot more than those during the festival preparatory period. An idiot dumped the young of Giant Toads into the Kowloon Hydra’s lake. What was she thinking... And the scam of the Amazing Hut. And customers being groped in the haunted house by Axis Cultists disguised as zombies...”

Well, I personally witnessed a few cases.

“And Axis Cultists infiltrated into Eris Cult’s stalls and loudly demanded protection money. Male shopkeepers wearing swimming trunks. And the incident involving painting colors on a lizard to sell to children...!”

I decided to brew some tea for Darkness.

Darkness took the tea and sipped, sighing.

“Thanks... I feel I have aged a lot in these few days...”

“How unlucky... But remember this, every time I listened to the willful demands of you people, I have the same feeling. Uh, although most of the complaints last night seem to involve me somewhat, I think there shouldn’t be so many complaints. So hang in there.”

Hearing my encouragement, the tired Darkness’ eyes were moist.

“Th-Thank you...! You are the only one who can understand me...! Now that I think about it, I have caused you a lot of trouble, really a lot... Uh, wait. Your latter sentences...”

Intending to stir up the stalls managed by Axis Cult, I left without waiting for her to finish her sentences.

—Upon arriving at the area managed by Axis Cult, I found a lot of people gathered like yesterday, but the reason for gathering was different.

“Welcome! This way for a certain country’s festive food, yakisoba!”

“Roasted octopus caught from forest! These octopus pieces are chewy and tasty!”

“Have some shave ice! Tasty shave ice! There’re strawberry, lemon, pineapple, red bean, and Tokoroten Slime flavors!”

Although there were some differences in details, what I saw before me was very similar to a Japanese festival.

“Ah. Kazuma, why are you so late? Look. This is prosperous! The shave ice you made in the afternoon ran out! I will create

water. Hurry and turn them to ice!”

Aqua ran over with the ice containers when she saw me.

Although the various stalls were somewhat different from those in a Japanese festival, it was similar enough to the original. It was very popular. Its novelty might be one of the reasons.

Good. At this rate, there should be a huge profit today.

My reward as the consultant would be great.

“The condition is not bad today. Yes. If you work hard honestly like this, your worshippers will definitely increase. Isn’t it nice that everyone can be happy?”

I smiled and said to Aqua as I used Freeze magic to create ice cubes.

She gave me a rarely seen smile.

“Yes. This is all Kazuma’s credit. Look, Kazuma. The children of Axis Cult are smiling so happily.”

She admitted frankly, unlike her usual self—

“Kazuma. Kazuma. I feel hosting this festival is great. Thank you for helping Axis Cult.”

—And smiled innocently.

... What was going on? Did the festive mood fry her brains?

This, plus the time she said “Pride goes before a fall” during the expedition against the insects— I felt Aqua was acting strange recently.

Was it because of Emperor Zell?

Did she mature because she had a kid?

No. She merely called the chick as “my kid”. She merely incubated an egg.

But her sincere thanks made me uneasy since I would be getting a lot of reward from the festival committee.

I decided to change the topic—

“By the way, since these stalls are popular, you must have earned a lot? It’s a rare opportunity. Use the earnings to rebuild that dilapidated Axis Cult Church.”

“We didn’t earn much. Yesterday, you said ‘If you are serious about doing business, you can make a profit! No need for tricks. Just do it honestly is the best!’ I obeyed and implemented a low profit, high sales approach. This festival is co-hosted, so the festival committee is making Axis Cult pay for the cost of operation. If you include this cost, we are still losing money.”

What happened to this fellow? Why did she suddenly become so obedient?

By the way, was Axis Cult still losing money?

I was the one who suggested letting both Eris Cult and Axis Cult share the cost of operation.

“... Is it? But as the sales increase, you should stop losing money soon! After all, this is unprecedented! I’m surprised that the impoverished Axis Cult could afford the cost of operation!”

“I pay for it myself. I received the reward for the previous

Kowloon Hydra hunt. That reward money plus my usual savings managed to pay for it. I wanted to build a beautiful dragon nest for Emperor Zell, but I guess we'll just have to make do."

"..... I-Is that so?"

I felt sinful and guilty. I couldn't look Aqua in the eyes.

"What happened? If you are unwell, I can heal you. After all, you have worked really hard lately. Okay, don't move. I will give you a extra powerful one."

Aqua smiled and used a powerful healing magic on me.

—After the festival ended on the second day, I walked towards the committee room.

Aqua enlightened me.

She purely wanted to enjoy the festival.

And what was I doing?

I was driven by my passions, wanted to watch the poster girls in swimsuits, organize cosplay event, make the two cults compete, and make a profit of it all.

... I decided.

I would tell Aqua everything I had done so far, apologize to everyone, and resigned from my post as advisor. From tomorrow onwards, I would enjoy the festival too.

Yes. Tomorrow would be the third day of the festival. There would be a fireworks display.

I would watch the fireworks with Megumin, listen to the

complaints of Darkness who would be very tired, and drink wine with Aqua.

I thought of these as I opened the door, intending to inform the committee of my resignation—

“Oh. We are waiting for you, Advisor-dono!”

“Come, Advisor-dono. Take a seat!”

I was stunned after opening the door to the committee room.

The committee members smiled and urged me to take the seat of honor. There was something else.

Or rather, my eyes were glued on a few of the people present.

“Good evening, Regular Patron-san! We heard a lot about your miracles from the committee members~”

“Thank you for your frequent patronage, customer! I heard we owe it to you for the succubus cosplay being permitted in this festival!”

Right. They were the assistants in the shop I frequently patronized— the one providing succubus service.

The chairman pushed me to my chair as I stood dumbly in the doorway.

Wh-What was happening? This was bad, really bad!

Specifically the unusual way the succubi were dressed. This was exceptionally bad.

The onee-san succubus in sensuous black body suit and the Lolita succubus smiled at me seductively.

Perhaps this was what succubi would normally wear.

The chairman whispered into my ear as I stared hard at the succubi.

“It seems you know them too. They operate a small restaurant in this city. This time, they wore swimsuits to serve as the poster girls of various shops. They say they want to reward the advisor who acquired the permit for this costume...”

Heh. I was very troubled.

I originally intended to tell them I want to resign.

Aqua was working so hard. I should decline solemnly and decisively.

If I accepted their reception, I would surely be lost. Wake up, Satou Kazuma! Are you a man who was so easily manipulated?

Right. Even if the sensuous succubi wanted to repay me—!

“Since we are having a festival, let us drink and keep you company. Hehehe. We won’t let you go back tonight. We must let Regular Patron-san enjoy himself!”

I took the wine glass without hesitation, letting the onee-san sit next to me and pour me some wine.

The chairman raised his glass.

“Then, cheers to our consultant’s activeness and sales! Come, Advisor-dono. Please give us a cheer!”

I stood up immediately between the two succubi and raised my voice.

“Let’s walk towards blessedness by making a lot of money!
Cheers!”

“Cheers!” X4

Chapter 4 - Gifting Beautiful Fireworks To The Night Sky!

Part 1

The third day of the Thanksgiving Festival.

Dressed in a one-piece, an astounded Megumin said to (the still lazing in bed) me:

“...Forget coming back at dawn— What are you doing this late in the day?! Hey, come on! Don’t forget that we’re going out to watch the fireworks today. Hurry up and get changed!”

I drank too much yesterday.

After coming to this world with no minimum drinking age, I’d become very familiar with the taste of alcohol.

“Uuuugh... If I tried to squeeze through a crowd right now... All sorts of things would come out...”

“You’re such a weakling, what kind of man are you?! If a guy knew he had a date with a girl, wouldn’t he normally watch how much he drinks? Anyway, what were you even doing last night? You came back in really high spirits.”

I couldn’t possibly say that I was out drinking with the succubus sisters.

“Go talk to Darkness... Tell her to postpone the fireworks a day...”

“I’m glad you don’t want to break your promise to me, but don’t be so willful. You’ll drive Darkness crazy. Especially after today, Aqua and her people really ran her ragged.

Aqua and her people ran Darkness ragged?

I thought they finally got their acts together last night— What happened now?

While I was lazily thinking this, Megumin tore off my blanket and reached for my clothes...

“Woah! Hey, wait a minute, what’re you doing?! Why’re you stripping me all of a sudden?! Sheesh, every now and then you do something completely out of nowhere and freak me out!”

I jumped out of bed before I could be stripped.

“I saw you with your clothes melted off after that fight with the Kowloon Hydra, your naked body doesn’t faze me anymore. Now come on. If you don’t undress yourself, I’ll just do it for you.”

I actually felt that getting stripped by a girl wasn’t all that bad, but I was afraid of what either Aqua or Darkness would say if they saw this.

So I changed my clothes and got ready to wash my face, all while Megumin was watching.

“... I-I really didn’t expect you to change your clothes right in front of me.”

“What, didn’t you just say my naked body didn’t faze you anymore? ...Whew, I feel a lot better now that I’ve had some water. Anyway, you said something about Aqua and her people putting Darkness through the wringer, right? What’d

they do this time?”

“The Axis Cult stalls were pretty successful last night, their sales were close to the Eris Cult’s. So the Axis cultists got cocky, claimed they’d sell more than the Eris cultists, and demanded more space for setting up stalls.”

What happened to the Aqua I saw last night?

Did she regress?

...No, no, it was too early to make any conclusions. She should’ve been reborn.

Right. It must just be a portion of the Axis cultists getting carried away.

But...

“... I’ve got a bad feeling about this, but let’s leave it to Darkness for now. Yeah, we should just avoid the Axis Cult area today. Let’s go watch the fireworks.”

“Good idea. It’s the summer festival after all, we should try and avoid trouble for once and do something like a date instead.”

Probably feeling the same thing I did, Megumin readily agreed.

That’s right. This was a summer festival.

I was always getting dragged into troublesome matters. Even if it was only once in a while, I should get have a chance to leisurely enjoy a festival too—!

“—Somehow, I saw this coming.”

“Why’re you stopping all of a sudden? Come on, let’s keep going.”

Megumin looked puzzled and dragged me away from leaning against the entrance of the shopping street.

“This is my first time going to a festival and watching fireworks with someone else! Oh, Megumin, I’m not doing anything wrong, am I?! I prepared for this as much as I could!”

“The only thing wrong here is how excited you are. Please don’t panic just because it’s a festival.”

Even though Megumin said it was a date earlier, Yunyun came too.

I greeted Yunyun at the meeting place and dejectedly dragged my feet after them...



“It’s too early for us to be alone right now. After the fireworks, let’s go back home together.”

Megumin walked beside me and whispered in my ear.

“I always just stayed home every festival before this, I never thought I’d participate in one. I’m so glad that I left the Home of the Crimson Magic! ...Kazuma-san, are you feeling all right? You look sort of strange...”

“Huh, what?! N-N-Nothing, I’m just really excited to participate in this festival too! It’s, uh, such a surprise to see you again, Yunyun! I guess it’s normal to unexpectedly run into friends at festivals, huh? Oh, and you said you stayed home before? Yeah, I know what you mean, as a high level hikikomori I totally know what you mean. I didn’t want to come either when there were festivals and crowds. Yeah, yeah, that’s just normal.”

I was a mess after Megumin’s successful ambush. Yunyun was a bit surprised at my reaction.

“I wasn’t a hikikomori like you were, Kazuma-san. It’s just that whenever I went to a festival by myself, I’d run into some classmates playing together. Maybe they were just trying not to hurt my feelings, but they’d always say things like ‘Sorry we didn’t invite you too’ or some other apology...”

“I get it already, so cut it out! It was all my fault, so just stop talking, okay? I’ll play with you today!”

Damn. What’s wrong with the plot all of a sudden? Megumin’s been on the initiative a lot lately.

What was going to happen? What were we going to do after

we got back? She obviously didn't mean we were just going home together.

Was it okay for me to have some expectations?

Women were so cunning.

A mere whisper in the ear could cause confusion!

Part 2

I used Snipe to excel at the shooting game stall, and then abused my naturally high Luck to destroy at the lottery stall.

“... I’m not sure how to say this, but you should really learn some mercy.”

“Yes. Both the nice lady at the shooting game stall and the kind old man at the lottery stall were crying. They said they had to close their stalls early today.”

I was strolling through the various stalls with the two girls from the Crimson Magic Clan.

“Listen up. A festival is a war between customer and stall owner. In my country, almost nobody ever wins the lottery’s grand prize, even after the tickets sell out. And even if you do manage to win a prize, after you happily return home you might take a closer look and find out it’s a bootleg.”

“One of these days, you really have to tell me more about your country... Anyway, this year’s festival seems a lot more exciting compared to the years before. Kazuma, were you the one who came up with this costume parade? Everyone is having fun walking around in their favorite costumes. Though there really are too many people dressed up as succubi and incubi... Real succubi might get attracted here.”

A chill went down my spine when I heard Megumin’s sharp observation. I decided to keep nonchalantly watching the festival.

Axel was completely different from normal.

Vanir had opened a stall selling unusual masks.

Seeing all of the smiling customers (which included some succubi), even Megumin wanted to buy one.

Then for some reason, Yunyun suddenly went over and pestered Vanir to go back and watch the shop.

And there were more than just demons at this festival, too. The rarely seen beastmen, the long-eared forest elves, dwarves with full beards, and many other races were all here too.

Watching this fantastical scene under the dim lighting of the festival made me deeply feel how different this world was.

“This really *is* a parallel world...”

At some point I’d started to smile unconsciously.

“.....”

Right next to me, Megumin was staring at my reaction with an uneasy expression. It looked like she wanted to say something.

“What’s wrong? You look like someone banned you from casting Explosion.”

“...No. Nothing...”

Megumin always spoke her mind, even to a cadre of the Demon King or to a royal princess. It was very rare for her to be so reserved.

One of these days, I’d have to tell them that I came from another world.

Though I'm not sure if anything would change even if I did tell them.

They didn't believe Aqua when she said she was a goddess. They might just think that I'd started to talk nonsense too.

Maybe it was because life had been settling down recently, but lately I'd started to feel that coming to this world hadn't been all that bad.

Someday in the future, I'll tell them about my country—

While I was thinking that, an alarming amount of noise rang out from the direction of Axel's cistern.

It seemed the fireworks had started.

The night sky lit up with colorful lights. Cheers rose up everywhere.

Gazing up at the night sky, Megumin dropped her silent mood and tightly grasped my hand...

"Kazuma, let's hurry! If we don't join the fight soon, it'll be too late!"

... And fervently told me that.

"... Join the fight? Uh, wait a seco— Hey! Don't drag me! Look, can't we see the fireworks clearly from here?!"

"What're you talking about? We're adventurers! If we don't protect the festival, who will?"

What're *you* talking about?

But before I could say that, the behavior of the surrounding adventurers stopped me.

Wizards were running all over in excitement.

Even Yunyun, who was just standing to the aside earlier.

“Hey, tell me what’s going on! Isn’t this just a fireworks show?! Why’s everyone in such a rush?”

I shouted that as I ran after Megumin, and then—

“It’s the insects!”

Yunyun replied on behalf of Megumin, who was running ahead of both of us.

“The insects?! What about them? Are you worried about the bonfires all over place attracting bugs or something? That’s normal, what’s wrong with that?!”

This time Megumin answered my questions.

“Every summer, the guild puts out a request for insect extermination. Insects from the nearby forest and plains will fly over here thanks to how bright the festival’s bonfires are at night. They always circle about in the sky above us, waiting for a chance to attack, so the fireworks show was organized to cast Detonation and Blast magic into their midst.”

Wait, what the hell was going on?

“I don’t know what fireworks are used for in Kazuma-san’s country but... Here, summer fireworks are declarations of war against the insect swarms.”

Like I thought, parallel worlds are just...!

Part 3

—Unbelievable.

Earlier, Megumin had been whispering sweet nothings about us being together alone into my ear, so my expectations for later tonight were enormous. But once the fireworks started, she went straight to the frontlines.

Incidentally, just as she was about to cast Explosion inside the city, the police arrested her.

...And then took her away.

I can't believe how unromantic she is.

And here I was, all excited thanks to the summer mood—
Give me back my heartfelt feelings!

I helped stop the insect invasion, then dejectedly went back to my room.

But there wasn't any point in getting depressed right now.

I didn't bring my bow or any other long-ranged weapon to the festival, so even though I joined in on the defense, all I could do was dodge the flying insects. And while I was just standing there, idling, Chris caught me and hastily made a decision on a particular matter.

—I put on my black outfit and equipped the strange mask.

All of the magic items I purchased today were in my backpack. I was all set to go.

Yes. Now was the time to exact my vengeance on that damned armor.

In order to deal with that armor's shouting, I'd prepared special magical equipment.

It was nearly midnight.

Aqua was still celebrating the success of the festival, so she wasn't back yet. And Darkness was probably asleep.

My plan was to head out from my room's window instead of going out the front door, then group up with Chris.

I'd be in a lot of trouble if someone saw me in this get-up.

Putting aside Aqua, Darkness knew this outfit very well. If she saw me right now, she'd know exactly what I was planning to do.

Okay. Time to leave.

I opened my window and lowered my rope. But just as I was about to head out...

"Kazuma? Your light's still on. Are you asleep?"

Just as I was about to head out, I heard Darkness speak. I quickly retrieved my rope and closed the window.

"N-No, not yet! I was just about to head to bed, though!"

I hid the rope in a rush, double-checked that the door was locked, then breathed out a sigh in relief.

Darkness would definitely interrogate me about my plans tonight if she saw what I was wearing.

“I see... I’m sorry that I came so late at night. But, could I have a moment of your time?”

Darkness’ tone of voice was different from normal. I couldn’t let her find out what I was going to do, but...

“...I got it. But could you wait a bit? I can’t let you see me like this.”

“!? O-Oh, I understand. I’m sorry I interrupted you.”

While Darkness was panicking over something, I quickly took off my clothes.

I hid the mask and the backpack in my closet.

“Hah... Hah... S-Sorry for the wait...”

“It’s fine, you didn’t take that lon— Wait, why are you naked?! I-I won’t ask what you were doing just now, but at least stop panting!!”

Seeing me panting hard, Darkness blushed and looked away.

I messed up. I was in my underwear.

.....Wait a minute.

“Wait. I wasn’t doing anything indecent! Don’t misunderstand!!”

“I-I know! I won’t misunderstand, so put on your clothes already! And if you’re going to do that kind of thing, then wash your hands before you go to sleep!”

This moron was definitely misunderstanding!

I wanted to explain myself, but there wasn’t any time to.

“...Just forget it— What’s wrong, anyway? Aqua will spread some weird rumors if she sees you hanging around outside my room dressed like that, you know.”

Darkness was wearing some flimsy one-piece sleepwear. I wasn’t sure where I should look.

Though if I didn’t need to recover that divine relic tonight, I’d have stared at her until I was satisfied.

And of course, I was staring right now.

“Um... This isn’t a very good place to talk. May I come in?”

I wasn’t very comfortable with letting her in, since there was incriminating evidence in the closet.

But I couldn’t use that as an excuse.

I let her in, then sat down on my bed.

“Why the sudden visit? Is it something that needs to be done tonight?”

“I-It’s nothing like that! It could wait until tomorrow morning but... Um... Lately, everyone’s been so busy, and we seldom meet even in the house, right?”

Darkness wasn’t being very straightforward. She looked around my room as if she couldn’t calm down, then carefully sat on the bed as well.

Chris was still waiting. I hoped Darkness finished this conversation soon.

Meanwhile, Darkness was fidgeting around, twiddling her thumbs. Then, as if she had finally come to a decision, she raised her head and spoke.

“Kazuma, I, um... I’ve only apologized to you so far. I haven’t thanked you yet so... I was waiting for a chance to be alone with you in order to thank you properly...”



Her voice was very soft. She looked at me straight and sincerely.

Oh, was this about...

“Is this about when I stole you away from the landlord? I did that for my own reasons, so you don’t need to thank me. And hey, didn’t you decide to take on my debts on your own? I haven’t thanked you for that yet either.”

I responded jokingly, but Darkness didn’t laugh.

And while we were wasting time like this, Chris was waiting for me.

What a troublesome woman. There was no need for thanks.

As my attention began to wander...

Darkness revealed a pitiful expression as if she was about to break into tears. Forcing out a smile, she said:

“I’ve... I’ve gained so many memories thanks to you. Happy ones, refreshing ones, sad ones, and angry ones, all thanks to you. As the daughter of a noble family, normally I’d never have been able to experience things like that. I’m sure that if I hadn’t met you, I’d never have been able to travel with everyone and enjoy all of those dangerous adventures. I want you to know, this past year since I’ve met you has been the happiest and most blessed time of my life.”

She said all of that in a soft voice, and while I was dumbstruck in response she reached out both her hands to grasp mine tightly.

“So I want to thank you. And not just because you saved me

from the landlord. Before, when other people learned of my true identity, they always kept me at a distance. But you, you stayed by my side even after you found out I was a noble. I'm very, very thankful. I'm so happy living with everyone in this mansion. I feel as if... Yes, I'm sure what I'm feeling now is what I would've felt if my mother who died before I could even recall her face was still alive."

She continued shyly.

"So once more, let me grant to you my sincerest gratitude. Both for accompanying me for all of this time and for rescuing me even after I had given up all hope..."

Still gently grasping my hand, Darkness suddenly spoke like a proper noble lady.

—My heart was about to burst from excitement.

What was going on? Why did this lovey-dovey event suddenly happen?

Wasn't I already on the Megumin route?

I thought I was already past the route split, but a new one-san route's come out of nowhere.

Most people probably wouldn't understand what I just thought, but really, I was the one who didn't understand here.

How did this even happen?!

No, wait, calm down. You need to calm down, Kazuma Satou. She just came to thank you. Don't panic about it like some virgin.

Wait, no, I *am* a virgin!

But if I bring common sense into this, I can't let this drag on. I was so excited to watch the fireworks with Megumin earlier. If I got closer with Darkness on the very same day, I can't deny that I'd be a total scumbag. Wait, that's not the problem right now!

What am I even thinking? I'm so confused. I need to calm down. I can't be reckless. This is Darkness I'm talking about here, the girl who always says the weirdest things. Darkness, the girl who goes on rampages at the drop of a hat. Darkness, the girl who I nearly crossed the line with once.

"So tonight, um... As thanks..."

Darkness was blushing. She was leaning her face closer to mine. She was licking her lips in anticipation. Kazuma Satou, if she's like this then you need to show her your manliness!

Just calmly take the lead and enhance the mood—

"No, no, don't worry about it. You know, earlier Megumin thanked me for saving you too. But it's really nothing special when you consider how close we are!"

Good. I wasn't all that calm, but I'd say I got at least 80 points. Now to let the scene naturally develop—

"...Good grief. Why would you mention Megumin *now*? You can't read the mood at all."

—There was no development. Darkness stood up, slightly troubled.

"By the way, I received a notice from the police earlier. Megumin will be released later tonight. It's rather despicable of me to take advantage of that to come meet you, isn't it..."

After saying that, she suddenly bent over and leaned close to

me.

Her lips gently brushed my cheek.

She then stood up again and shyly said:

“This is what I promised you. I told you that if you defeated the Kowloon Hydra, I’d reward you with a kiss on the cheek, remember? As for your reward for saving me from the landlord... I’ll give it to you some other day...!”

As Darkness hastily turned to leave...

I shouted at her.

“Are you kidding me?! What the hell was that?! Hold on Darkness, you made the mood this hot just to kiss me on the cheek? Stop screwing with me! Both you and Megumin are the same! Are you two getting something out of messing with my expectations?! Redo! I want a retake! If you really want to kiss me, then I’m sure you can do it! Be brave and take that step!”

“Why are you always like this?! Give that sweet moment back to me!!”

Part 4

After Darkness angrily stomped back to her room, the first thing I did was furiously seethe in bed.

By the time I realized I'd forgotten about Chris and hurried to the meeting place, I was already two hours late.

When I arrived, I found Chris, who was also dressed in black and wearing a mask.

"You're ridiculously late! What took you so long?!"

"I'm really sorry, it's just that I had to do something with Darkness. Man, I really didn't expect her to come to my room so late at night while wearing something like that..."

"Huh?!"

Chris was stunned out of her anger.

"S-So you're doing this again, huh? Just randomly saying whatever to shock me into forgetting to be mad. Well I won't be fooled that easily. Even if you phrase it like that, nothing actually meaningful happened, right?"

"Yeah, pretty much. Darkness just kissed me all of a sudden."

"*WHAT?!'*"

Chris, who was pretending to be calm, cried out in alarm. Her face had froze in shock.

That expression wasn't very fitting for a goddess.

"There's not much time left, stop making that funny face and

let's go. I'm feeling really great tonight. Maybe it's because of what happened earlier."

"Huuuuh?! Wait, wait, why are you so calm after getting kissed?! You're lying, aren't you? This is just some unrequited love on your part, isn't it?!"

I didn't know why Chris was so stuck on this topic.

"I'm telling the truth. Ask Darkness 'Did you visit Kazuma's room late at night and suddenly kiss him?' if you don't believe me. But man, what's going on here? Earlier, Megumin also told me she liked me, and today she said that the two of us should go back home together after the fireworks show— Though she totally ruined that. Big Boss, what should I do? I might take my first step into adulthood this festival."

"Seriously?! Oh, now that I think about it, earlier you said 'my relationship with Megumin is pretty good. Darkness seemed to be somewhat interested in me too!'... Wait. Wait, isn't this a love triangle?!"

Chris covered her mouth with both hands and looked at me in fascination.

"Woowow... When did Darkness get so bold?! And hey you said Megumin likes you too right? What're you going to do? Who're you going to choose?!"

"Hey, it's too early to make a decision like that. I'm having a headache about it, too. The current situation is like the pre-route split section you see in a lot of Japanese novels. Yeah, it's gotta be that. All of the girls like me and a harem is being formed, after all... But you know, those two girls look pretty enough, but their inner selves aren't too hot. And if this trend keeps up, I might raise flags for some other girls too. I think I should wait until later to make a decision, but what do you

think I should do?”

“I think you should go die. But wow, what a surprise. When did everyone start to...”

Was she unused to talking about love because she was a goddess? Or was she just shocked because her close friend Darkness might have unknowingly stepped into adulthood before her? Chris staggered behind me as I led the way towards Undine’s mansion.

It was a cloudless night with the full moon high in the sky.

There was a reason we suddenly decided to take action tonight.

Our opponents would naturally be on high alert after our previous failure to steal the armor.

But with a festival going on, they should be a little more careless.

And this was just after the fireworks show, too.

The guards of this mansion also helped out with the defense of the city earlier. It was probably the so—called *noblesse oblige*.

TL Note: The social responsibility of nobility. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noblesse_oblige

So they’re probably exhausted. Plus, since this was the big, annual festival, drunkards were all over the place.

I had a plan to deal with the noisy armor, but if it failed and we had to escape pursuit, we could quickly discard our outfits and masks to mix in with the drunkards on the streets.

—Shortly after, we arrived at Undine’s mansion. The back

door we used before was completely locked, and the only other door was the front one with two sentries.

According to Chris, ever since our previous infiltration, there were sentries on duty all night.

“What should we do, Assistant-kun? This mansion isn’t as large as the palace was. Sentries won’t be as easy to get by.”

“Yeah, what *should* we do? Is there any way we could distract them...?”

While we were observing the mansion from a distance and planning our next move...

“Um... Are the two of you the Band of Silver-Haired Thieves?”

Suddenly, someone spoke out behind us. I immediately turned around.

“P-P-Pleased to meet you! No, wait, actually we met before! I met you in the palace once... I’m your fan, the Arch Wizard Megumin!”

Megumin, who should’ve have been arrested by the police, was standing right behind us.

Part 5

For crying out loud. How did this even happen?

“Wow, we really *are* famous! Look, we’ve even got a bounty of 200 million eris!”

After hearing Megumin declare herself as our fan, Chris was shyly pleased.

I wanted to complain that she shouldn’t be shy at a time like this, but I didn’t want to make the situation worse.

Chris and I had intentionally altered our voices, but a clever enough person would still recognize us.

Thankfully, Megumin was too starstruck—

“It’s so amazing that a band of thieves has such a high bounty! Oh, I’d like to ask, when the two of you snuck into the palace, was it really to protect the princess from a dangerous divine relic?!”

“Yes, that’s correct. We’re the chivalrous thieves. Normally we only help out commoners, but we couldn’t let such an innocent girl be exposed to such danger, even if she’s a princess. Whether it be a noble’s mansion or the royal palace, if someone’s in trouble there’s no place we won’t sneak into to lend a helping hand. That’s what it means to be part of the Band of Masked Thieves.”

“Wow...!”

I was secretly pleased to see Megumin looking at us with such admiration.

“Hold on a second, Assistant-kun. Aren’t we the Band of Silver-Haired Thieves? You can’t just opportunistically change the name now. And *I’m* the boss, remember?!”

“What’re you talking about, Big Boss? Back at the palace, you said I could be the boss too. So there shouldn’t be anything wrong with us being called the Band of Masked Thieves!”

We ignored Megumin and her glimmering eyes and held a private argument. And then—

“So, what’re the two of you doing here? This is the home of a noble, isn’t it? ...And his reputation isn’t that good...”

Megumin’s gaze was full of anticipation.

Chris and I shared a look and nodded.

“You’re... Megumin, right? Actually, we’re here tonight after something hidden in this mansion that’s necessary for the continued future of mankind. In all honesty, thievery is not something to be praised for, but... We believe that there are some things that have to be done, even if we end up labeled criminals.”

“Wow... Wooow...!”

Megumin looked at us as if we were heroes.

“Yeah, that’s right, we’re going to rob this house. We need to retrieve something that could decisively end the battle with the Demon King’s army. If you want to report us, we won’t stop you but... Please, believe in us. This is for the sake of all mankind!”

“I will. I’ll believe in you, so of course I won’t turn you in! ... But, um, I have a little favor to ask.”

Megumin started uncertainly, as if she was embarrassed.

“Please read this! This is a fan letter I wrote about how cool and charismatic the two of you are! I’ve been making sure to bring it with me everywhere just so I could deliver it personally!!”

Bowing her head, she held out a letter.

Oh yeah. After we came back from the palace, she started writing this.

I already knew it was coming, but actually receiving the letter like this made my heart beat faster.

Of course, to Megumin, this was just her writing a letter to her heroes. But to me it kinda felt like getting a love letter.

But just when I was about to take the letter—

“Thank you. As soon as we’re done with our work, I’ll be sure to read it.”

Chris snatched the letter first.

“Hey Big Boss, what’re you doing? That letter was for me!”

“Excuse me? It’s not *yours*, Megumin said it was for *us*, the Band of Silver Haired Thieves! I’m the boss, so isn’t it natural that I keep it?!”

As we started to softly argue between ourselves, Megumin bowed again.

“Thank you for taking my letter. I was looking forward to a lot of things tonight after the fireworks show, but I messed everything up. I was a little depressed because of that... But if it meant that I could meet the two of you, maybe it wasn’t

all that unlucky.”

She said, smiling innocently.

Part 6

“You know Big Boss, it’s good that we didn’t expose our identities, but meeting her at a time like this makes me wonder about our luck.”

“With the two of us here, there’s no chance of any bad fortune. Look, we even got a fan letter.”

“I really wish I could help out, but I should probably head back and apologize to somebody...” —Megumin said that and left. She was still worriedly looking back at us, though.

Was she going to apologize to me?

“Big Boss. Do you think I should go back early tonight? Actually if I go back now, I feel like I might get in an event with Megumin.”

“Absolutely not. In just about every way, today’s our best chance to get in! And what do you mean you’ll get in an event with Megumin?! At least choose somebody between Darkness and Megumin!”

No choice then. I’ll just have to finish the job fast.

Then I noticed Chris was keeping Megumin’s letter inside her clothes.

“...Big Boss, after we finish here, let’s decide who gets to keep that latter.”

“Fine. We’ll decide it in a game of rock-paper-scissors.”

“Don’t decide this with luck!”

—Because of some unexpected incidents, I needed to go back earlier than expected tonight.

We should finish this quickly.

“Let’s subdue the sentries. I feel great today, handling just two people will be easy.”

Was my unusual excitement because of how well things were going with those two?

“You were this excited too back when we infiltrated the palace... You get really lively at night. Are you a demon or something?”

“If I was, all of the NEETs in Japan would be demons too. Big Boss, let’s use Hide and get closer to them. It’s a full moon tonight and the festival’s bonfires are still burning, though, so there’s a ton of light. Be careful.”

Chris and I used the Hide skill, then clung to the walls and crept toward the sentries like we were ninja.

The two sentries were leisurely chatting away.

It should be possible to ambush them.

To get the timing right, I calmly listened in on their conversation.

“This festival has been awesome, it’s so different from all of the festivals before! It must be thanks to the Axis Cult joining in. But more importantly, making the poster girls wear swimsuits was a stroke of genius!”

“Same with allowing succubus cosplay, I found one amazing babe. This festival has just been amazing. But did you hear? Supposedly, there was some outside help in the management

this time around.”

Oh, they’re talking about me.

I was popular enough to be a topic of interest among soldiers. What a great feeling!

“The outside help was from *that* guy, right? Pitting the Eris Cult and the Axis Cult against each other, then fanning the flames just so he could get a bigger commission out of it... Talk about a bastard.”

“Oh, right. Bringing in the Axis cultists, allowing for succubus cosplay, making the poster girls wear swimsuits... I hear all of those suggestions were his. What was his name again? It should’ve been something like—”

I jumped out of the shadows.

When they noticed me, they immediately went for the swords sheathed at their waists—

“Double Drain Touch!”

But I covered their mouths with my hands and used Drain Touch to drain their mana.

The sentries, who nearly exposed some important secrets to Chris, soon quieted down.

“Don’t be so reckless, Assistant-kun! It’s good that you surprised them, but they nearly raised the alarm!”

“I’m in great condition today, so I was sure I could take them. And I managed it in the end, right? So there’s no problem, just leave this to me.”

That was too close.

I wasn't afraid that they'd shout, I was afraid that I'd get some divine retribution if they kept talking.

The two sentries were unconscious due to mana exhaustion. Chris dragged them away into the trees.

"Even if it turned out well, you shouldn't be so reckless. Most of the soldiers helped defend against the insect invasion. They were only so careless because they were tired, you won't be able to do this again."

"I know. Let's keep on going, then. I want to head back early and be lovey-dovey with Megumin."

"Weren't you just getting along well with Darkness? I won't agree to another resurrection if you end up dead because of this."

Don't say things that make people feel uneasy.

"By the way, about what those sentries were just talking about... So there was outside help with the festival Assistant-kun, do you know anything about this?"

"N-No..."

...That was another reason to finish this job fast.

—Our infiltration into Undine's mansion was much smoother this time.

Part of it was because we were more familiar with the layout since this was our second time.

But most of the reason for our safety was because we had a goddess of luck present.

I didn't really want to think about it but— If I hadn't triggered

the alarm in the treasure vault back when we infiltrated the palace, that mission might have gone smoothly too.

We soon arrived at the treasure vault and nodded at each other in front of the hidden door.

I grabbed an essential item from my pocket then pushed the door open.

Before Aigis could shout, I smashed the magic crystal I had bought earlier as I entered the room.

As the crystal shattered, the entire room was magically sealed off from the rest of the mansion.

I didn't buy this from Wiz's Magic Tool Shop. It was a regular magic item that was actually useful.

It didn't last very long, but this magic crystal could create a weak boundary field.

So even if Aigis shouted with its telepathy again, nobody outside the room would hear.

Meanwhile Chris pulled out a magic sack that could block weak magic from her backpack. It was from the same magical tool shop.

If Aigis was covered by this sack, he shouldn't be able to use telepathy.

"I was wondering who it might be. You're those thieves from before! Haven't you given up yet? Thieves! *THIEVES—!!*"

Aigis immediately shouted as soon as it saw us.

I ignored its shouts and started to remove the chains binding Aigis.

“Hey, what’re you doing? Why aren’t you afraid?! This is a noble’s mansion, you’ll be executed if you’re caught— Wait. The mansion is too quiet. What’s happened?”

“Hah, did you think we came unprepared? Too bad, your telepathy’s being blocked from everyone else in the mansion!”

I vengefully mocked Aigis as I removed the chains.

“What did you do?! Okay, fine, I understand! Let’s make a deal, then!! You want my power, right?! Then find a worthy master for me, and I’ll gladly cooperate! I can compromise a bit regarding the master, so please!!”

Aigis fervently beseeched us. Where was its previous arrogance?

“You should’ve said that the first time we came, you dope! And guess what, moron? We’ve decided that your master’s going to be a man with big, shiny muscles! You’d better get ready to serve your new master!!”

“Don’t speak nonsense, you bastard! Stop and think about this from the perspective of an armor! Please, just do it! You wouldn’t want to be worn by some slovenly old man, right? If you had to protect someone, it’d be better to protect some cute girl, right?!”

“I agree completely, but it’s your fault that we were so miserable last time. We’re not going to kindly listen to your requests anymore, idiot! Yeah that’s right, you’re a giant idiot!”

“A-Assistant-kun. I know I did it too last time, but getting into an argument with some armor is just too childish.”

Chris was holding the sack open. She couldn't take any more of watching me argue with Aigis just like she did last time.

"Aaaaagh! No, no, no! A woman! I must be worn by a woman! I don't care if it's a black-haired beauty, or a blonde lolita, or a sexy brunette. At this point, I'm fine as long as it's a woman! You know, my wearer would sweat a lot in the heat of battle. Consider how I felt about being drenched in a man's sweat!"

Aigis cried out in anguish. I felt a bit of pity for it.

It was given the disgusting task of protecting a man, and ended up drenched in his sweat. That wasn't something you could excuse as just a "punishment game".

"Just give up. Oh, don't bother trying to shout for help on the way out. Chris' sack there can block weak magic, we'll be wrapping you in it. Anyway, you're not even alive, so why do you have so many demands? Stop being so willful"

As I said that, the last chain on Aigis was removed.

"ORAAAH!"

The shout was followed by a dizzying blow to my jaw.

"A-Assistant-kun?! Wait, what!? Why are you moving!?"

I steadied my shaky head and looked at Aigis to get a grasp on the situation—

"I've decided. I will go on a journey in order to find a pretty woman worthy of wearing me. It may be nice being waxed daily by the maids in this mansion, but people like you might show up again. So I'll just have to find my own master."

After being freed from the chains, Aigis suddenly punched

me.

Then it started speaking nonsense. Chris was still trying to persuade it.

“Aigis, wait. This world needs your power! If it’ll help, until we find your new master, I can wear you...”

“To hell with that! What fun would there be in being worn by an androgynous thief?! Like I said, I will find my own master. But since you want to wear me so much, I might as well evaluate our compatibility. Hmm, your face is an A. Our job compatibility is a C. But your breast size is below even an F. I’m sorry, but our partnership simply wasn’t fated to be”

“Arrrgh—! I was trying to be nice, too! Fine, I’ll just have to use force! Bind!”

Chris finally blew her top and screamed as she tossed the wire at her waist.

A metallic wire stole Aigis’ freedom—!

“Oh? And just what were you trying to do with this wire? What, do you want me to tie you up with it? Heheh, you looked so pure, but it looks like you’ve got some heavy tastes!”

—But it didn’t work.

The wire Chris tossed fell off for some reason.

Aigis shrugged and mocked the astounded Chris.

“Bind!”

I used the same skill as Chris, only for my wire to fall off as well.

“Haven’t learned your lesson yet? What, do you really not understand what’s happening? Who do you think I am? I’m the legendary Sacred Armor Aegis, the toughest thing in this world. I’m immune to magic and skills. I can heal my master. I’m the sacred armor that can ever sing and dance! I won’t lose to thieving brats like you!!”

This jerk!

“Big Boss. Skills might be useless, but it can’t be all that powerful if it could be chained down. Let’s work together and take it down!”

“I-I understand! I’ll go from the right. Assistant-kun, circle around it!”

Hearing our plan, Aegis made a fist.

“So you still want to fight? I’ll have you know that my fists are literally fists of steel. Yes, that’s right, I’m a walking weapon!”

“What’s this guy even saying? It’s so noisy and annoying! It’s way too talkative for a suit of armor! Hyah!”

“Yes, I caught it!”

Chris and I pounced on it at the same time and pressed down on Aegis’ body.

“Big Boss, take its arm off! Take it apart and stuff it in the sack! And it talks too much, so just leave the helmet behind in this room!”

“Hey there, that’s a dangerous line of thought. But unfortunately, my body can’t be disassembled. When my master wanted to put me on, he had to say a chant to do it. Instead of carrying me away, wouldn’t it’d be easier to just equip me? The chant is ‘I want to be an armored girl!’, come

on, try saying it.”

“I-I want to be an armored gi...”

“There’s no way the chant would be stupid, Big Boss, you’re being tricked! Hey, woah! Th-this thing is a lot stronger than I thought.”

Aigis shook us off from its arms and started walking towards the room exit...!

“Big Boss, this isn’t good! If it leaves the room, it won’t be silenced anymore!”

“Ooooooh, I guess there’s no choice then. Hey, Aigis, obey my commands! I am Eris, the goddess in charge of this world. I have an obligation to manage you, so be obedient and come with me!”

“You’re trying too hard. What a waste. Your face is cute, but I suppose one must still consider the inner self. I’ll need to be more mindful while I search for my new master.”

“What did you say——?!”

Chris flew into a rage when she heard Aigis doubt her divinity.

“Well then, it’s time to part ways. If you want me so much, learn to be charming enough to get a man’s attention first, little girl. Just so you know, breast size is the most essential factor. Some people may say that flat chests are more novel, but personally I think that’s a bluff by people who just don’t have what it takes.”

“Why you——!”

Even though Chris had a furious grip on Aigis’ arm, it simply dragged us with it out the hidden door.

“To the Undine household who couldn’t keep me, a world-class treasure. You have taken good care of me up till now! Please forgive me for leaving on my own to find a new master. If you want me back, then prepare a world-class beauty! If you do, then I will surely return!”

A telepathic message strong enough to hurt everyone’s heads rang through the mansion.

“Ah, freedom! Yes, I’m completely free! The sky’s the limit now! Aigis Flying Kick!!”

After shaking us off, Aigis came out of the treasure vault and left through the third floor window with a flying kick.

At the same time, the lamps in the mansion all lit up. There was shouting everywhere.

The commotion must have woken everyone up.

“What!? The thieves are back again!?”

“That was Aigis’ voice just now! Check the treasure vault!”

This was bad. There were voices coming in this direction!

Last time, we made a rope out of the window curtain to escape from the treasure vault.

But there wasn’t anything like that this time, maybe as a defensive measure or just because they didn’t have a new curtain ready yet.

“Big Boss, this is bad. This is the third floor and we have no escape route. We’re going to have to secure your wire onto that pillar then go down from there!”

“Hey, you’ve got a wire too. Use yours!”

“This is an expensive, custom-made special item! They’ll track me down if they investigate it!”

“So that’s why you were in such a rush to pick it up after your Bind failed! But mine is also custom-made, so they can track me down with it too!”

Then there was no other option. We were going to have to forcefully break through like we did at the palace.

“Get ready, Big Boss. It’s been awhile since we’ve had to show our true ability.”

I steadied my breathing.

“There’s no need to panic. Don’t worry, there’s always a way out when we’re involved. Did you forget who I am? I’m the goddess of luck!”

Chris was smiling playfully as if she was just pulling a prank.

Suddenly, there was a bright flash of light outside the window. Every window in the Undine mansion shattered simultaneously.

As the broken glass flew, the explosive roar that everyone in the city was so familiar with tore through the summer night sky.

Part 7

—This was all that damn armor's fault.

"Get out of there, Kazuma! I promise that if you come out now, I'll only lecture you!"

Darkness was kicking my door in a rage.

"This is unacceptable, young lady! Shouldn't a lady of a noble family behave more demurely?!"

I shouted from the other side. To prevent the door from being kicked open, I was using all my strength to push it closed.

"Don't treat me like a noble lady only at times like this! Come out and explain yourself, Kazuma! Or else Chris here will receive your punishment too!"

"Assistant-kun, save me!!"

I heard Chris' voice from the other side of the door.

But...

"Too bad, Darkness. That trick won't work on me. That may have *sounded* like Chris, but my reliable Big Boss would never give in so easily. You're using Aqua's Super Entertainer spell to mimic her voice, aren't you? Don't underestimate my brain. I'm sure of it, that was your voice just now!"

"No it wasn't! What are you even talking about, Assistant-kun?! That's crazy, even for you!"

After I reasoned it all out, I heard Chris' agonized voice.

I was currently hiding in a certain hotel.

After Aigis defeated us, Chris and I broke through the ranks of the servants, who were stunned by the explosion. We ran all throughout the city, and finally hid inside a random hotel...

I heard Darkness from the other side of the door again.

“It’s about time you came out, Kazuma! Chris and I are the only ones here. There’s no police, or anyone from the Undine family. So get out of there, or else your boss might really get it. Are you okay with letting that happen?”

My response was simple:

“Do as you please.”

“You traitor! Hey, Darkness, untie my rope! I’ll help you get Assistant-kun out of there!”

“Y-You two are just...!”

—An hour later.

Darkness had kicked the door down and subdued me. With my upper body bound, I was sitting up straight nearby Chris.

“So is that why you did this? Good grief, didn’t you promise to tell me if you were going to do anything last time? Now there are eyewitnesses from the Undine family. Don’t you know how many people are hunting you down for your bounties? Even Axel’s adventurers are after you!”

After hearing our explanation, Darkness pressed her hand to her forehead and sighed.

Since I was tied up, I had to move my head to indicate things to Darkness.

“Just for the record, earlier I said ‘If the other party is a noble, maybe we could ask Darkness for help? Use the authority of Darkness’ family to make things easier’. But Big Boss here...”

“Huh?! That’s right, Assistant-kun did say that! But Darkness, that noble acquired the divine relic illegally! His reputation isn’t good either, he’d definitely deny he had it! Also, you were busy with your duties as the lord!”

Darkness sighed heavily.

“If you’re going to commit a crime otherwise, I’ll think of something no matter how busy I am. Nobles have their own ways of dealing with things, even for something acquired illegally. As long as the price is right, it’s always possible to negotiate with nobles. They’re very sensitive to benefits, after all. But more importantly...!”

“It hurts! It hurts! Darkness, stop! I’m sorry! Next time, I’ll definitely tell you before I steal something!”

“Don’t you have other options besides thievery!? Anyway, the person I’m really angry with here is—!”

Darkness was drilling Chris’ temples angrily when she gave me a fierce glare.

“How could you just leave immediately like nothing had happened after you had that moment with me last night? Unforgivable! Didn’t you have any complex feelings of excitement or confusion? Do you know something? Whenever *I* think back on what I did then, I’m filled with embarrassment for a long while! I’m still struggling internally about it!”

“Ugh! It’s going to crack, it’s going to crack! My head’s going to crack! I’m sorry, I’m sorry, it’s all my fault! But you know, if it’s that embarrassing then just don’t do it in the first place!

And that cliff-hanger kind of kiss was unbearable for me too!”

Darkness had grabbed my head and was clamping down...!

“Woah!”

Chris suddenly cried out after hearing our conversation.

Then she started trembling...

“No way... So what Assistant-kun said last night was actually true...! Darkness really did it! She really took the initiative and kissed someone!!”

“Gah?! Chris, that’s not what’s important right now! Also—Kazuma, I can’t believe you told her!”

“I didn’t have a choice, Big Boss wanted to know why I was so late! Anyway, given our current relationship, should you really be this embarrassed over a kiss? Haven’t we seen each other naked and washed each other’s backs in the bath before? You even said we should become adults together back when I snuck into your house.”

“Ugh! Kazuma, you—! Fine, I understand how it is. This topic is over, I don’t have the time to fool around with you! I’ll undo the ropes, so just get out of here!”

Darkness blushed and hurriedly removed the ropes.

“I just heard something amazing again. What was that about!? What stage has your relationship reached?! Am I the only child here?!”

“We’ll talk about this some other time, Chris! Here, let me remove your rope...”

“Don’t put this off, I want details! Wait, Darkness, why aren’t

you telling me anything? What happened to our friendship between girls?!”

Watching this sudden role reversal, I massaged the part of my body that’d been tied up.

“Y-You’re being annoying, Chris! This isn’t important right now! Honestly, the two of you, Aqua, Megumin... Why are you all causing trouble while I’m acting as the lord?!”

Said Darkness as she pressed her forehead again.

“...Huh? Hey, putting me aside, did Aqua and Megumin stir up some trouble too?”

“... Megumin is being held at the police station. Supposedly, she used Explosion magic for no reason within the city. And no matter how she was interrogated, she only gave the same unreasonable response: ‘It was unbearable not being able to use magic during the fireworks. My Explosion magic is much prettier than any firework. Anyway, I won’t apologize, but I’m willing to compensate.’ So they decided to lock her up till the end of the festival.”

Obviously, Megumin was the one behind the shockwave that assaulted Undine’s mansion last night.

After she saw us off, Megumin was still concerned about us. When she saw the lights in the mansion turn on, she realized we were in danger and used her magic to save us.

And then she was arrested since she couldn’t move after casting Explosion.

I felt sorry for her. I should bring her something later.

“And Aqua? What’d she do this time?”

Darkness frowned unspeakably.

“Thanks to how unexpectedly popular and profitable this festival has been... The Axis cultists want the Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival to be the only event next year.”

Chapter 5 - Gifting A Legend To This City of Rookies!

Part 1

“Hey, Aqua! What is going on!?”

In the Axis Cult Church at the suburbs.

I heard they were here to prepare for tonight’s festival, so I rushed over and shouted angrily at Aqua, who was having a toast with Cecily.

“Oh. Kazuma, what is it? Why are you panicking?”

Aqua held her wine glass and caressed the head of the chick on her knees, like those antagonists always did in the movies.

Cecily was standing next to her as if she was a maid attending to her master.

“I see, so Kazuma smelled a banquet and came over for food, right? It can’t be helped. Although Kazuma is not an Axis Cultist, he has some credits this time. Come, sit by my side. I will share some yakisoba with you.”

Aqua said casually and took out the small plates.

“Fool! Now is not the time to eat! What is the meaning of this!?”

I flashed the proposal that I took from Darkness before her nose.

“Eh. Isn’t this my proposal? ‘Firstly, from next year onwards, change the festival name to Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival and disassociate it with Eris Cult. Secondly, relax the restriction on Tokoroten Slime...’ Hey, I don’t remember writing the second one!”

“I wrote the second point, Aqua-sama! I worked hard this time. I think I deserve a reward!”

“I see. Fine. So? What’s wrong with this?”

“Fine your head! Lots of things are wrong I’m asking you what are you intending to do with this!”

Faced with my rage, Aqua started to whisper with Cecily who was beside her.

“Why do you think Kazuma is so angry? Is it because we didn’t invite him to our celebration?”

“No, Aqua-sama. It must be because we didn’t include his wishes when we wrote the proposal.”

Aqua nodded in acknowledgement and swiftly wrote something on the proposal before handing it over.

“Thirdly, from now on, swimsuits will be the official costumes for poster girls during the festival.”

“What, are you insane!? That’s not what I meant! Didn’t you get completely caught up in the mood and say you would work hard and honestly?! Why did you do something so drastic so suddenly?”

“Woah! What are you doing? I even added your wish in the proposal!”

While Aqua was flaring up at me for tearing up the proposal,

Cecily slowly came before me.

“Wait. Do you intend to waste Aqua-sama’s good will? I may be unworthy of representing the Axis Cult, but I’ll stand outside your house every night and endlessly sing hymns if I have to, you know?”

“Come if you dare! I will punish every last one of you who did these ridiculous things!”

“Wh-What is the matter!? We worked so hard, so why can’t we just enjoy the fruits of our labor!? Cecily said it too— ‘Aqua-sama is Aqua-sama after all. You should enjoy your life better than anyone else. From now on, the Axis Cult will serve you with all our might.’”

“Don’t be so easily influenced by people that you have just met! Hey, go home now! Don’t get involved with weird things! You too. Don’t plot to make Aqua more useless!”

“Weird things!?”

Aqua dodged my hand that tried to bring her back, hiding behind Cecily who was shocked.

“I won’t go back during the festival! That’s right. I won’t go back! ... the wise me has learned. If I stay here, I will be revered by everyone! And, Kazuma, even you have to agree that this festival has been a bigger success than normal. . No matter what, the Goddess Aqua Thanksgiving Festival will be held next year. Look at the festival managed by the Eris Cult! They keep losing people to the stalls on our side. Most of the stalls by the Eris Cult have barely any customers!”

Sigh. I thought I could solve a major issue easily this time, but it seemed a leopard just couldn’t change its spots.

After seeing her recent changes, I thought she damaged her brain after eating something strange, but she hadn't changed at all.

Give me back the feeling that you have improved— was what I thought, but I also felt relieved at seeing her familiar self. I hated myself like this.

Cecily interrupted with a self-satisfied look.

“It is as Aqua-sama said. Our stalls are so popular now. At this stage, it's almost impossible for the Eris Cult's side to become popular again. And... please don't think you are the only one who has business sense. Aqua-sama came up with some fabulous plans!”

Aqua's plans couldn't be anything good.

Part 2

After leaving the church, I wandered around the city as I considered how to make the Axis Cultists suffer.

Aqua got carried away because they performed well during the festival by their own efforts.

Should I join the side of the Eris Cult and make some suggestions for new stalls?

... No. I'm out of ideas. If we began preparing now, we could only manage one or two stalls at most.

But there wasn't any other option, so for now I should go to the Eris Cult.

—When I arrived at the Eris Cult Church, I saw...

“Hm. Assistant-kun, how did it go?”

Chris sweeping the floor before the church with a broom.

Her question must be referring to me rushing over to lecture them after learning about the proposal of the Axis Cult.

“I couldn't do a thing. I completely cannot communicate with them anymore... They won't give up until they are completely ruined... What should I do? Things became like this because I helped Aqua to acquire the festival permit. It is my responsibility. I intend to wake them up before they do any sillier things.”

Facing the serious me, Chris merely shook her head.

“Sempai deserved to be thanked by people for making the festival popular. Compared to her, I couldn’t even recover Aegis. That armor is so conspicuous, yet I still can’t find its current location. I guess it’s better not to host my festival next year. I might be a bit lonely, but I think sempai would make the festival lively next year too!”

After saying that, she laughed helplessly.

She was laughing, but she seemed very lonely. My heart ached to look at her smile.

She was the thief who encountered danger because she was too naïve. She was also the perfect goddess that everyone loved.

She was my ideal type of girl. She was an important friend whom I could talk to, including gossip relating to Megumin and Darkness and various stories about Japan.

At the same time, she shared secrets with me, even more than Aqua who came with me to this parallel world.

When performing her duties as a goddess, she would stay in that white room alone.

When acting as the chivalrous thief, she would be alone too.

My intimate friend, somewhat unreliable boss—

The girl I longed for, the goddess I’m happy to devote to—

“I keep troubling you, Assistant-kun. First, recovering the divine relics. Now, having you stop sempai’s reckless behavior.”

—Sweeping the floor as if to cover up her loneliness...

“Thank you, Assistant-kun. Only you know my real identity, and only you know about what I have been doing. I secretly work against the demon king’s army not because I want to be praised... But because of you, I feel my hard work is worth it.”

—Smiling gently like the goddess Eris.

.....

“Big Boss... No. Eris-sama. There is something I would like the Eris Cultists to help with.”

Facing the puzzled Chris, I said something that I repeated often to the committee members.

“I have a plan.”

Part 3

—Today was the last day of the festival.

The hot weather did not stop the passions of the many customers.

“My honored guests. I’m very happy and honored to be the host for this event...”

In the square of Axel City.

A man wearing a tuxedo was speaking into a microphone-like magic item on the stage in the middle of the square.

“A special event for this festival, organized by the Eris Cult—The first Miss Goddess Eris Contest has officially began!”

The host announced loudly. The audience below the stage cheered wildly.

This was my plan to kill two birds with one stone.

A beauty contest organized by Eris Cult.

“Hey, Assistant-kun. I don’t know what to complain about this situation anymore.”

“Big Boss. It’s fine if you just enjoy the festival.”

I casually responded to Chris’ helpless complaints.

I knew such events would make the festival lively.

I knew it, but I didn’t have much expectations. Because I couldn’t believe the decent Eris Cultists would tolerate

adding the name of Eris to a beauty contest.

But it was different now.

If the Eris Cultists did not persevere now, there might not be a Thanksgiving Festival for their own goddess next year.

I used all my might to convince the Eris Cultists, including Darkness as well. Finally, this proposal was realized.

“I can’t believe Darkness would accept your willful request.”

“This also showed how important Eris-sama is to her.”

Darkness ranted “Using Eris-sama’ name for a beauty contest is blasphemy!” and pestered me for a long time. I finally convinced her by saying, “This would regain the prestige of the Eris Cult and allow us to recover the divine relic, so Eris-sama won’t mind.”.

Chris shyly scratched her cheek.

“I-If it’s just using my name, I don’t really mind...”

“Tell that to Darkness. She was still insisting that she didn’t want to go this morning.”

Chris and I stood by in the last row so that we could see the entire place, including the stage.

This was to make it easier to find and catch Aigis.

It wasn’t just to save the Eris Cult.

This beauty contest was bait.

The precious divine relic that was still wandering in the city might leave at any time.

The fastest way to recover Aigis would be to find a beautiful woman that it could accept.

And I was using Darkness as one of the baits by requesting her participation in the beauty contest...

“... Uh. The reason Darkness did not want to participate probably wasn’t because of the beauty contest itself, but...”

Chris was about to say something, but I couldn’t care about it now.

I rented a magic camera for this day and prepared a telephoto lens.

It was obvious what I wanted to do.

I aimed the camera at the stage.

The women of this city, who were especially confident in their looks, were smiling on the stage.

“Now, the first contestant... Please tell us your name, age, and job!”

Part 4

This major event that involved the Eris Cult, Chris, and Darkness had begun successfully. But would Aigis really fall for this simple trap?

This method was supposed to solve all of the problems at once but...

... Damn. I'm worried. It's alright, it should be successful...

That fellow's thoughts and behaviors were very predictable.

Although I didn't want to admit it, that fellow was somewhat similar to me.

I watched the surroundings vigilantly and glanced at the beauties on the stage.

"Uh... Based on my personal taste, she is too slender. Her face is very nice, but only her face..."

Chris thought that we would be in for the long haul, so she went to buy some drinks.

I was definitely just glancing.

Besides, I would notice a conspicuous armor like that the moment it appeared.

I looked at the slender beauty and made my own appraisal.

“Is that so? The personality should be more important, right? But her figure is really good. It’s her clothes that make her look thin.”

“True. She seems rather strong-willed. A somewhat slender body and a strong personality would be the best combination. Anyway, looking thin... I should have asked the judges to include a swimsuit segment.”

“You. Why didn’t you include such an important item?! Are you stupid!?”

.....

“I caught you!”

“Ugh! What? What are you doing!? Now is the critical time. Don’t mess about!”

I agreed that now was a critical time, but one of the reasons for hosting this beauty contest was to catch this fellow.

I tossed the net that I prepared earlier over Aigis, who appeared blatantly before me.

The careless Aigis was easily caught by the net.

“I didn’t think you idiot would take the bait so soon. This beauty contest was organized to lure you out!”

“Wh-What did you say!? You are quite capable. I’ve changed my evaluation of you.”

This fellow was the one for whom Chris and I spent so much effort?

I wished it could return us the efforts we gave so far.

“Anyway, you came too quickly! Why did I catch you within five minutes since the contest started? You better apologize to Chris who was buying drinks because she thought we would be in for the long haul!”

“Ah. Can you quiet down? I can’t hear that girl’s profile. Listen, the host is asking her what she has been eating to grow such big breasts.”

“... It can’t be helped. We’ll redo after her profile. But I must maintain my advantageous position. No problem, right?”

“Fine. Redo after that girl goes behind the scene.”

After a temporary truce, I tried not to let Aigis out of my sight and waited for that moment.

The guests around us didn’t notice our disturbance, concentrating fully on the stage.

Finally, that girl’s profile ended and she walked off the stage.

“Okay, let’s continue! Because of you, I went through so much trouble. Now you better be obedient!”

“Ha. Come at me if you can! The Sacred Armor Aigis definitely lives up to its reputation! In the past, my master and I sliced and diced many monsters! Throw whatever you want at me, I’ll cut it to ribbons!”

As we started fighting again, we tried various ways to gain the upper hand. At this time—

“Okay. Thank you very much. And that was Sonya’s introduction! Oh. Truly a contestant with glorious twin peaks! But the next contestant shouldn’t be underestimated either! She is the well-endowed contestant who could potentially be the winner of this contest!! Come. Open the curtains!”

The host's words made the audience unusually noisy.

Aigis and I paused in our poses to pull on the net and watched the stage intently.

The girl who appeared next was really impressive.

As for how impressive— She was probably a match for Wiz or Darkness...

"... Hey, can we wait until she finishes before starting again?"

"... It can't be helped. Let's wait until then."

"Sorry about this. Also, can you take a picture with the camera? Don't worry. I won't escape."

"..... Good idea. There are so many people anyway. If the fully armored you decided to run, I just have to ask the people around to help and I could catch you easily. It's quite tiring to maintain this pose too."

I loosened my grip on the net and aimed the camera at the stage.

"Hey, look! That's against the rules! Why didn't you arrange for a swimsuit segment!?"

"It couldn't be helped. I was in a difficult position too! My companion said that if she had to wear a swimsuit, she wouldn't participate! Damn. I'm slightly regretting this. If I knew it would be like this, I should have insisted...!"

Aigis and I complained as we tiptoed to watch the beauty contest—

"Hey, hey, hey, is that defenseless costume really okay?! Hm. It's summer after all. There's nothing wrong with swimsuits!"

“She is one of the poster girls. I was the one who suggested letting the poster girls wear swimsuits. Uh, it is also to prevent heat stroke and for convenience during the water fights.”

“You are really clever. It can’t be helped if it is to prevent heat stroke. It’s not good to fall sick after all. Oh. The next girl isn’t that good. Her dress is very cute, but she’s trying to get by with costume and makeup.”

“That’s just heresy, makeup should only enhance your natural look. If I were the judge, I’d deduct points for using that much.”

I complained, but that didn’t stop me from snapping a few shots.

“Next contestant! Everyone should be familiar with the destitute shop owner whose name is synonymous with ‘pitiful’! But recently she seemed to have made some money, so the truth is somewhat different now! Her reason for participating is to win the prize money to clear her debts! Everyone, please welcome— the shop owner of Wiz’s Magic Tool Shop!”

“Yeeeeeeeeees! Wiz, Wiz is here! So pretty. Wiz is most suited for wearing aprons!”

“Hey, this perfection rate is really high. I want to hug her tightly! I want to tightly hug this elder sister who looked so huggable! Or let her come inside me! But it’s obvious that she is a magic user. It’s regrettable that her job is incompatible with me. Damn it, can’t she change to a frontline job!?”

Aigis and I were excited at Wiz’s unexpected appearance.

The audience was excited too. I was worried that the high voltage atmosphere might make the next contestant nervous, but...

“Next is... Oh. It’s the contestants in succubus costumes! Even though this contest is held in honor of Goddess Eris, they still dare to dress up as demons... These ladies are really... bold...”

The excited host’s voice became softer and finally became silent.

He couldn’t be blamed.

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaah! ! Hey, what is this? There are three people with such high ratings!? The elder sister on the right and the Lolita on the left are very hard to give up on, but what is the deal with that beauty in the middle!? What a devil! No, a demon girl! That goes far beyond a mere devil, that’s an outright demon girl!”

Aigis made such an uproar as if it was broken. The audience fell into silence.

There were three succubi on the stage.

I was familiar with the ones on the left and right.

They worked at the shop I frequently visited.

But I had never seen the beauty in the middle, even though I was a regular customer.

Next time, I should ask for her to appear in my dreams.

The succubus beauty in the middle took over the microphone.

“Everyone, good evening. After seeing so many contestants, everyone must be a bit tired... Let me strip off my clothes to bring everyone into the world of fantasy...!”

The elder sister in the middle said with a seductive voice and placed her hands on her clothes—

Everyone’s gazes were fixed on the succubus costume, which was very sensuous to begin with.

The audience did not speak, swallowing their saliva in anticipation of the next moment.

Was this elder sister really going to strip in front of so many people!?

Was she serious!?

Were these erotic monsters affected by the festive mood, intending to show their true forms!?

“Hey, hey. Camera! Camera! Prepare the camera! Stay focused!”

“Ah. Sorry! So dangerous. To think I was so careless... That’s a true succubus for you. What an amazing service!”

I set up the camera, preparing to take the best shot. At this time, the beauty stripped off her clothes...!

“Gorgeous molting! Hahaha. You think it’s a succubus queen? How regrettable. It’s actually moi, the assistant of Wiz’s Magic Tool Shop! Oh. The negative emotions of the entire place are amazing. Delicious, delicious!! Wiz’s Magic Tool Shop is currently offering life consultation. If anyone has any problems, please visit us!”

.....

“Please don’t throw things onto the stage! I understand everyone’s feelings! I really do! But please stop throwing things!”

After Vanir and the two succubi left, rubbish was still being thrown at the host who remained on the stage.

Of course, Aigis and I threw things too.

After the audience calmed down, the host pulled himself together and pointed exaggeratedly at the other side of the stage.

“N-Next is a winning candidate for today. Everyone in this city must know her! She is an adventurer and the repeated winner of the Endurance Contests! —Now, as a contestant in the Miss Goddess Eris Contest, the daughter of the noble Dustiness family! Dustiness Ford Lalatina-sama!”

Oh. She was here!

Since she was good looking, I requested her to act as the bait for Aigis. But I already caught Aigis at the start of the contest, so this was rather meaningless now.

I wanted to ask Megumin too, but too bad she was still held up in the police station.

“Wow! Very good! Very awesome, isn’t it? Pretty face, sexy figure, and it’s a noble lady!? She will get very high scores!”

When Darkness appeared, Aigis became excited.

Darkness dressed up beautifully today as if she was a noble lady visiting a villa for leisure. She seemed very concerned about the contest.

She was wearing the white dress that she usually wore in the

mansion. She put on light makeup and tied her hair into a single braid hanging over her shoulder. She had a big white hat on her head.

Before the audience, she shyly blocked her blushing face with the hat and lowered her head.

“Not bad, right? This fellow is my companion! I asked her to participate as a bait to lure you out!”

“Are you serious? Good. Very good. Hey, I’ll let her be my master! I definitely would not let her sexy body be hurt!”

It was unexpectedly easy to capture it, and even find a master for it.

“But she is a crusader. A frontline job, specializing in receiving enemy’s attacks. You said before that even an armor gets hurt when it receives attacks, right? And it might not be obvious now— her abs has six packs.”

“Six packs huh. But this is not bad... No, even though she’s a crusader... Damn. Why a crusader? ... But I loved her looks. It’s probably difficult to find someone better...”

Secretly, I agreed with Aigis’ troubled assessment.

It was true she looked good. Both her face and her figure.

If her personality was better, she would be perfect, but she turned out like that.

Sigh. What a waste...

“Why don’t you keep watching? There are still other contestants.”

“Yes. There’s no need to decide before the contest is over.

Oh, the introduction is starting.”

The host’s voice had gone up in tension, probably because Darkness was a noble.

“Then— Everyone should know you, but please proceed as required. Tell us your name, age, and job!”

“... Dustiness Ford Lalatina... Age 18. My job is temporary lord...”

Perhaps because she was nervous, Darkness’ voice was very soft even with the microphone’s amplification.

Her inner turmoil was evident even from a distance.

At this time, an adventurer in the audience shouted.

“Lalatina! Louder or we can’t hear you!”

Then, one after another—

“Ojou-sama! You are so pretty today!”

“Where is your usual armor? Still, your current dress is very cute, Lalatina!”

There were voices teasing her everywhere.

Besides me, Darkness was also well known among the adventurers in this city.

The drunk adventurers who knew her took the opportunity to tease her.

Looking at Darkness who was embarrassed to the verge of

tears, my sadistic nature was inflamed.

“Well done, Lalatina! Quick show us your abs that you are proud of!”

“Isn’t she your companion?”

“Fool! I must cheer her on precisely because she is my companion! Look at Darkness as she blushed on the verge of tears. It’s rare to see such an expression! She can win with this!”

“I see, so you’re actually doing a good thing. I will help you! Hey, pretty girl, show us a bit more of your body!”

Following my lead, Aigis egged her on.. Seeing this, the other adventurers also started taunting her.

“That’s right! Show us your body!”

“Why not wear a swimsuit?”

“Your lordship! Lift your skirt for us to see!”

The usually useless Darkness was now in the limelight like an idol.

I was very excited and shouted even louder.

“You might as well strip!”

Hearing this, Darkness looked at me with a shocked expression.

Oops. Oh dear, I was discovered.

“That’s right. Strip now!”

“Darkness! Strip!”

“Strip! Strip!!”

“Strip! Strip!!”

At this time, everyone was of one mind. Everyone shouted out in unison for her to strip...!

“What are you doing?”

Aigis and I were sobered up by Chris’ icy voice as she returned with the drinks.

Part 5

“—Seriously, you guys are terrible. Don’t bully my friend.”

“N-No. After seeing Darkness being watched and cheered by everyone, I had an impulse to set her up as a super idol...”

“What kind of idol would be urged by people to strip... Even Aigis is messing about so happily... You are supposed to be a divine relic of the highest grade...”

In a place some distance away from the last row of the audience.

Facing Chris who was so disappointed that she was about to cry, Aigis and I were bowing our heads.

I said to her as she sighed deeply.

“But at least we caught this guy according to our initial plans. No matter what, this event has made the Eris Cult very popular too. Isn’t that good?”

“Not good at all! How are we going to clean up this mess!?”

There were cries of anguish and complaints among the audience now.

Enraged by the repeated cries of “Strip!”, Darkness pounced at the audience and was beating up the adventurers.

The adventurers resisted, but Darkness had the upper hand since everyone was unarmed.

... This fellow. Next time, she should fight unarmed against

monsters.

“This is getting fun. That girl is rather strong, isn’t she? Beauty and fights are the spices of a festival. I’m getting excited too! Burn, passion! Glow, my body! Good— I’ll join in the fight!”

“Don’t make a bigger mess! Sigh. Aigis, I’m really begging you, please be more amiable... Then, after defeating the demon king, I can use my authority as a goddess to grant your wish along with the wish of the hero...”

Chris sighed and put her hand on Aigis, who was excited by the royal rumble.

Aigis shrugged and said.

“This wench is talking about being a goddess again. Listen, girl. I know goddesses. I have seen them. Or rather, it was a goddess who gave me to a certain girl. Let me tell you. Goddesses are all abnormal.”

“What did you say!?”

Truly, they really were abnormal.

The goddess, who (probably) gave this armor away and was currently plotting evil deeds with her cult, flashed across my mind.

“Y-You!! Ugh! I can’t take it anymore! Before I find a suitable master for you, I will seal you away in the lake! There are other divine relics in the lake anyway! You can keep each other company!”

“That kind of punch cannot hurt my body! I’m a divine relic after all! Ha. Try harder, ojou-chan!”

“Eh—!!!”

I observed the surrounding and ignored Chris, who was repeatedly attacking Aigis despite being in pain.

The audience nearby were enjoying the ongoing fight between Darkness and the others.

It was different from what I had in mind. This was becoming a circus show, but it was still lively.

But what about the main purpose of this event?

Luring Aigis out was our goal.

Taking the opportunity to re-assert the authority of the Eris Cult— What about this goal...

—And then, by chance, we learned that this goal had not been achieved.

“Well. It was funny. Sigh. For an event like a beauty contest, the pretty girls in our city only have good looks, so it is very likely to turn out like this. For the inflexible and uncreative Eris Cultists, this event was still considerably interesting, right?”

One of the audience said before us.

“It is interesting. But personally, I think we should just let the Axis Cult host the festival next year. The Axis Cultists are all fools, but they know how to make a festival lively!”

“That’s right. Those people are idiots, but they are always so merry! Even though they are idiots!”

There were similar comments everywhere. There were even people who wanted to leave after finding out who was the most beautiful girl in town.

Chris stopped her attacks on Aigis.

“Eris Cult truly worked very hard. But it is better for the annual festival to be lively.”

“Yes. I heard the planning committee is still considering whether to change it to the Aqua Festival next year. It seems it might be put to a vote.”

“Eh. Anyway, those people must be currently doing stupid things at the stalls managed by the Axis Cult. Let’s go over there after the event here has ended.”

... And then.

“Ah. Haha. The children here worked very hard, but it can’t be helped. Now it seems Eris Festival may be cancelled next year.”

As if to avoid worrying me, Chris smiled and looked at me. She seemed very lonely.

“Well. I don’t really have the time to enjoy the festival anyway. While we are casually enjoying the festival, a lot of people are being tortured by monsters... So I must recover as much of the divine relics as I can.”

Chris, who had been secretly doing good deeds for the world, said while pretending not to mind.

And then looked at Aigis.

“Please, Aigis. Can you obey me?”

“Eh... It’s somewhat moving, but I won’t obey you merely because you look depressed!”

.....

“Hey, Aigis. I will introduce you to a very beautiful girl. Can you listen to Chris’ instructions?”

“Ha? Very beautiful girl? ... Hey, I can guess what you are planning. It must be that, right? The masked uncle earlier! You want to let that guy transform into a beautiful girl and say to me, ‘Look, I definitely introduced you to a beautiful girl.’ Do you think Aigis-san is really so stupid—”

“Big Boss. No. Let me address you as Eris-sama... I have a somewhat— no, a very difficult request.”

I interrupted Aigis’ speech, looked into Chris’ eyes and lowered my head.

Chris looked a bit embarrassed.

“Hey. Isn’t this ojou-chan called Chris? What do you mean by Eris-sama? Is your brain... Ha? Heat stroke? Or is it fever? You said it yourself that it is important to prevent heat stroke. This cannot do. Wait here. I will get the doctor. Consider it as a reward for coming up with such a wonderful plan—”

“Fine, Assistant-kun... No. I will listen to your request, Kazuma-san. If it is within my capabilities, please say it.”

Chris looked at me seriously.

“Heh! Even if my temperament is good, I will still get angry if you keep ignoring me! Hey, what are you planning?!”

I said to Aigis, who was complaining in a metallic noise after being ignored—

“Hey, Aigis. I’ll let you see the real thing next.”

Part 6

The berserk Darkness was finally subdued by the management and brought to a room to calm down alone.

The scene was still a bit restless, but at least the event could continue now. The host on the stage used his microphone once more.

“Uh. The disturbance has more or less ended. All the contestants have shown themselves. Now to announce the winner for Miss Goddess Eris Contest—”

At the moment when the host said this.

—The noisy crowd suddenly fell silent.

The rowdy adventurers.

The merchants who were preparing to leave.

Everyone, regardless of gender or age— were focused on the stage.

At some point, a gently smiling girl appeared in the middle of the stage.

“... Uh... Eh? Th-That is...”

Everyone was staring at the girl. Only the host managed to say something—

“... I say, can we consider you as a last minute... contestant... Is that... okay...?”

The girl continued to stand in the center of the stage, smiling

warmly.

—That's right.

—In terms of both her face and her dress, the pretty girl looked like the commonly depicted form of Goddess Eris in this world.

“Yes. I'm sorry for deciding to join the contest at the last minute. I have troubled everyone.”

Eris put her hands together and bowed to apologize. That action alone caused the host unbearable embarrassment.

“No, no, no, no! Amazing! What an amazing surprise! Thank you very much for participating in this Miss Goddess Eris-sama Beauty Contest!”

The host naturally added “sama” to the name of Miss Goddess Eris Contest. Perhaps he intuitively sensed her true identity.

But everyone had some doubts like “Would this really happen?”.

As if the gears were moving once more, there was a bit of noise in the silent city square.

Aigis stood beside me, unmoving and silent.

Finally, the host on the stage made a decision and moved the microphone awkwardly before Eris' face.

“Uh, then please... Uh. Because every contestant needs to answer some questions, so please forgive me... If possible, please tell us your name and such...”

The host asked in trepidation and anticipation.

Hearing his question, Eris smiled so sweetly that everyone sighed. She said.

“My name is Eris.”

In an instance, cheers echoed through the city square.

There were people fanatically screaming “Eris-sama”.

There were people silently looking up at Eris as if intoxicated.

There were also people who put their hands together in sincere prayers.

The people near me, who were possibly Eris Cultists, kneeled down and cried.

“Th-This is the real power of a goddess. This is beyond my expectation.”

I was a bit uneasy about this exaggerated reaction. I talked to Aigis, who was still standing unmoving next to me.

The unmoving Aigis finally started to tremble.



“Found her...”

It said softly.

“Found her. Found her! I found her! I found my master! Who is that? Hey, who is that!? Why is there such a beautiful girl in this world!? I don’t understand. I don’t understand!!”

“Hey, calm down! I feel you are breaking your character—even though an armor shouldn’t be considered as a character.”

I tried to calm the panicked Aigis down. The host continued his questions on the stage.

“Ah. Haha. Th-Thank you very much! Thank you very much for answering my question! Uh. There are two more questions...”

The excited host flinched and asked.

Her age and her job.

Eris smiled.

“It’s a secret.”

She playfully closed one eye and put her index finger to her lips.

Cheers roared once again. The entire scene was shaking.

At this time, someone— no, an armor...

The divine relic (self-proclaimed) roared as it shook unnaturally!

“N-No. I ca-cannot make it! Eris-sama, stop doing these killing moves! I, Aigis, cannot endure any more of your mischievous poses!”

“You are the one who cannot make it! What the heck are you!? You are noisy. Be quiet. If you can do that, I will introduce you to her.”

Hearing this, Aigis trembled violently.

“Seriously!? Seriously!? You... No, my lord just said I’ll be introduced to that lady!?”

“Yes. I said that once before— ‘I will introduce you to a very beautiful girl. Can you listen to Chris’ instructions?’ By the way, the Goddess Eris standing over there is in fact Chris. She mentioned it a few times herself. She is a goddess, but you just refused to believe.”

“Fuck! What should I do? What should I do!? How should I apologize to Eris-sama!? Hey, you come and apologize with me. I’ll let you wear me for a while!”

Honestly, I didn’t want to wear Aigis, but he had no more reason to disobey Chris now.

I smiled bitterly at her, who was watching us from the stage and smiling happily—

“The Goddess Eris-sama has descended!”

I heard someone shouting loudly.

“—Eris-sama, please shake my hand! Recently, I have been too unlucky! Please bless me as the goddess of luck!”

Who said that?

Perhaps it was a very urgent wish. This person's shout was heard clearly even amidst the noise and fervor.

The scene quieted down as a result.

... Eh. Wasn't this situation really bad?

"Me too! Eris-sama, please shake hands with me too!"

"Fool! I came first!"

"Eris-sama, I have a hungry kitten at home! Please bless me to win the lottery on my way home...!"

The excited audience were trying to climb onto the stage.

"Everyone, please calm down! Please don't climb onto the stage!"

The host tried to maintain order, but nobody listened to him anymore.

Eris was a bit troubled on the stage, but she still shook hands with her own people.

Eris-sama, you were too obliging. Everything would be fine if you just solemnly refused!

"Hey. Go and protect Eris-sama."

"Ah. Yes. This is getting bad. Look. There's a greedy idiot who is holding Eris-sama's hand and refusing to let go!"

The Eris Cultists near me shouted these words and charged.

This was indeed getting bad. The mood was like an idol shaking hands with her fans, but the people were unnaturally hot-blooded. It wasn't strange if someone was up to no good.

“Hey. Aigis. Help quickly! If this carries on, Eris-sama will be sandwiched! If you want to apologize to her, protect her well!”

“Oh! What is this development that could let me die without regret!? I will definitely protect her! Super protection! Let me, Sacred Armor Aigis, protect Eris-sama’s untainted body and her blood of chastity!”

“Uh. No. What blood of chastity... You may not have knowledge in this field. I don’t think you really understand the meaning of that, right?”

“Eris-sama is a goddess, so she must be a virgin! She must be the type that will scream and cover her face in embarrassment when she sees a naked man. But she will still peek through her fingers because she is slightly curious. She is kind-hearted and gentle, so her scent is very fragrant.”

How obsessed were you?

“Hey, quickly! Once you reach the stage, hide Eris-sama inside yourself! Then break through the mob!”

“This is great! To become one with Eris-sama so soon! E-Eris-sama inside my body... Hehehe...”

“Hey, are you really okay? Why do I feel like you are the most dangerous one here!? You better concentrate on clearing the mob. Didn’t you say you are good at fighting!?”

Aigis charged into the chaotic mob as if answering me.

“That’s right. After finding my true master, I’m hotter than anyone in this crowd! Make way! Touch me and you will be burnt!”

“Hot! What’s wrong with this guy!? Wearing a full suit of

armor on a hot day like this. He's crazy!"

"Don't shove! Letting your hot plate armor burn.... No... Ugh!"

"Pour some water on this guy!"

Oh, right. This guy was standing there for so long on such a hot day. The entire armor was scorching.

I passed by the crowd which made way to escape the scorching Aigis, charging right for the stage.

"K-Kazuma-san! H-How should we solve this disturbance..."

Eris asked in panic as she continued to honestly shake hands with the mob.

"Aigis is coming. Hide inside him and escape somewhere isolated! ... Hey, you! Stop holding on to Eris-sama's hand! If you like to shake hands so much, I will shake yours!"

"Ah, stop! I already decided never to wash my hand for the rest of my life!"

I forcefully shook his hand, making him cry. At this time, Aigis moved past the people and arrived on the stage.

"Sorry for the wait, master. Please enter my body! My equipping keyword is 'I want to be Aigis' bride!' Quickly, say it!"

"I-I want to be Aigis' br..."

"Don't be tricked, Eris-sama! You too! Stop messing around at this time!"

Aigis shrugged in regret.

“It can’t be helped... Come, master! Combine!”

At this moment, the armor emitted a glaring light.

Everyone, including me and the host, hurriedly shut our eyes because the light was too glaring. When we looked at Eris again...!

“Hot! It’s hot, Kazuma-san! I’m going to be cooked!”

Eris cried out in anguish from within the armor.

Not good. I forgot this guy was really hot right now.

I lifted my right hand towards Aigis.

“Freeze!”

“Magic is useless.”

Oh, right. Skills and magic didn’t work on this guy!

“Eris-sama vanished?”

“Where did Eris-sama go!?”

“Did she return to the heavens?”

“No. Those two guys who climbed on to the stage did something!”

After finding Eris gone in the flash of light, the crowd pointed at Aigis and I while climbing onto the stage.

“This is bad... Hey, Aigis! I will attract their attention. You run away with Eris-sama!”

“Leave it to me! And since you are working hard, I will give you some good news! Eris-sama smells really good!”

Couldn't I think of something to save this guy's brain?

B-But I'm still rather happy to hear this report.

"K-Kazuma-san!? The crowd is getting ugly. This is too dangerous...!"

As if she couldn't be bothered with Aigis' naughty words, Eris asked in a fuzzy voice from inside the armor.

I replied.

"No problem. The opponents have no weapons. I won't lose now."

That's right. If the opponents are unarmed, I have the advantage of Drain Touch skill.

I raised my hand towards the people who were climbing onto the stage.

"Use this to clear your heads! Create Water!"

At this time, a lot of water rained on their heads!

"Ugh! This bastard!"

"You dare to do this! Hey! Kill him!"

"That adventurer Kazuma is famously weak! Gang up on him!"

The people who were drenched by me climbed onto the stage and charged at me.

I successfully aggravated them.

Perhaps because Eris was still resisting inside the armor, Aigis

wasn't leaving. So I said.

"Big Boss, please leave quickly! It's the duty of a minion to cover for the boss to escape!"

"M-Assistant-kun..."

I turned my back on Aigis, who was unwilling to leave.

"And today is the last day of the festival! Festival is all about stalls and fireworks. And— fighting is the spice of festival!"

I clenched my fist.

"Bring it on!"

"Assistant-kun!"

The voice of Eris faded behind me. Aigis must have brought her away. I listened to her shouting and charged at the angry mob.

Part 7

Standing before me with her arms crossed, Darkness looked down at me.

“Hey, schemer. About this incident, what do you have to say for yourself?”

After making a scene at the beauty contest, I was arrested by the police and thrown into jail.

After receiving the instructions to “stay here and calm down”, I spent the last day of the festival hugging my knees alone in jail. Finally...

“Hey. I’m grateful for bailing me out, but this treatment is a bit too much.”

Thanks to Darkness, I was released from jail. Upon returning to the mansion, I was made to sit straight in the living room.

Aqua was sitting straight next to me. She was hugging Emperor Zell and looking at me with glowing eyes.

It seemed this fellow did something stupid.

What was the meaning of Aqua’s look as if the lecture companions have increased?

Like me, Megumin was released due to Darkness pulling some strings. She tiredly lay on the sofa, looking at me as if she didn’t know what to say.

“And why are you calling me a schemer? Tell me the details of what happened after I was arrested by the police.”

Although I couldn't imagine what I could have done wrong, I still placed my hands on the carpet, preparing to bow my head at a moment's notice.

"Then let me ask you... When you suggested the shopping street chairman to let both cults jointly host the festival, did you say this— If we incite the Axis Cult and the Eris Cult to compete, the festival will become livelier and the shopping street will make more money."

I kneeled down at lightning speed.

Darkness continued saying.

"And I heard from Aqua that you were the one who first thought of combining the Eris Thanksgiving Festival and the Aqua Thanksgiving Festival. The shopping street chairman said that you were the one who made those suspicious proposals like letting the poster girls wear swimsuits and the costume parade... It's true, right, Advisor-dono? This is brought over by the chairman. He said it is your reward."

It seemed everything was exposed when the chairman sent the reward over.

Very few people knew that I was living with Darkness.

What should I do? Everyone's gazes was so icy.

Could I get by playing the fool?

"Don't make that guilty expression, as if we are bullying you. But to keep a cut of the festival's profits is a malpractice left over from the previous lord. I don't blame you. You should openly take it... What? Are you not going to take it, Advisor-dono?"

Darkness intentionally pretended to be understanding and

showed me the huge bag of money.

Stop. You might as well just scold me fiercely.

“Wait, Darkness. There’s something I’m concerned with... Kazuma. I heard that recently you are very close to a lot of women. For example, drinking all night with the women in succubus cosplay. I’m not saying you can’t do that. After all, Kazuma isn’t dating anyone.”

Megumin suddenly tossed out a bomb.

“Y-You really did as you pleased this time... Uh, but it’s not my place to criticize your private life. We don’t have that kind of relationship— But we were getting along so well, don’t you feel guilty doing this?”

Hey. Darkness, what were you saying?

Hearing this, Megumin snapped her head towards Darkness.

“Eh. I just heard something I can’t ignore! When were you two ‘getting along so well’? What do you mean? After being saved by him from the lord, you think you are a little princess now? Anyway, how well exactly are you getting on? What stage is it? Did you cross the line during the festival and have a physical relationship? That’s just debauchery!”

“N-No...!? Actually, we don’t have a physical relationship yet...!”

“Did you say ‘yet’? That means one day it will become that kind of relationship!? Slut!”

Pestered by Megumin, Darkness cried out in anguish. I turned to Aqua—

“Hey, Aqua. Don’t you think that right now I’m like a male

protagonist with a harem?”

“You. You are being lectured right now. Why are you so happy?”

Hearing our conversation, Darkness hurriedly asked to avoid Megumin’s interrogation.

“Right. Right! Aqua! Next is you! Really. How are you going to solve this!?”

Darkness’ hair was already in a mess.

“... Darkness. Let’s talk it over. That masked demon said so too. Humans are a species capable of communicating.”

Sitting straight next to me, Aqua placed Emperor Zell on her knees and said something unusually reasonable.

By the way, what did she actually do?

“True. I think communication is very important too. If you had talked to me from the start, things won’t become like this.”

Darkness thought for a while and replied.

—After asking for details, it turned out to be like this.

On the day of the Miss Goddess Eris Contest.

The Axis Cultists were getting carried away because the stalls were very profitable recently. They decided to use Aqua’s proposal and give the Eris Cult the finishing blow.

That was Aqua’s fabulous plan mentioned by Cecily.

This fellow thought that the stalls related to Japan would make money, so she schemed and did something she

shouldn't have done.

“To think you could come up with such a marketing scheme. This is only very profitable for the people at the top, right? Can Aqua really think of something this amazing?”

Megumin asked as if she was impressed.

Darkness moved forward as if saying that wasn't important.

“Then, who taught you this ‘multi-level marketing’? It would be hard for Aqua alone to commit such a difficult crime.”

Darkness brought her face close to Aqua.

Aqua turned and pointed.

At me.

“Nonsense! You are trying to frame me! —A long time ago, I was complaining about the debts, ‘Ah. We can't make money at all. Maybe I should try out multi-level marketing.’ And I explained the method then!”

“So it was you! How involved must you be in this incident before you are satisfied!?”

“Wait! I didn't ask her to do this! In my country, this was widely considered criminal... Hey, Aqua. You know very well this is criminal! Don't pretend you didn't hear!”

That's right. This idiot used the Axis Cultists to do multi-level marketing.

The legal system in this parallel world was not as extensive as the one on Earth, so it had no resistance against multi-level marketing.

Add in the crowd attraction caused by the festival, and the multi-level marketing system was set up promptly and made a lot of money in just one day.

It made too much money.

So much that even Darkness noticed it easily.

Aqua suddenly lifted her head to look at Darkness.

“I can’t help it! I heard that Eris herself shamelessly joined the beauty contest! If this continued, the Eris Cult would become popular again! And I needed a lot of money to host the Aqua Festival alone next year...!”

“That is not an excuse to commit crime! The root of the problem was Aqua whining about wanting the Axis Cult to host a Thanksgiving Festival...”

“But if it is just Eris alone, it is too unfair! Why can’t I have a festival!? Why can’t I be praised!? I also want to be served and worshipped! Besides, multi-level marketing is not considered a crime!”

“It is indeed not a crime! Not yet! This is merely because there is no law relating to this new form of scam! Your behavior is undoubtedly a malpractice!”

As their arguments were heating up, Megumin and I shared a look and smiled bitterly.

“Since the law cannot stop me, what I did cannot be considered a crime! So return me the money I made! Return me the funds for next year’s Aqua Festival!”

“Those money have been returned to the victims! If you persist in this, you will have a criminal record like Megumin and Kazuma!”

“Hey, wait. I was merely put in jail to clear my head, so it’s not a criminal record!”

“Right, right! I was also merely warned by the police!”

Epilogue

Epilogue 1: Giving Thanks And Blessings To The Goddess

After the sun had set, I came to a certain party in the shopping district.

“You are too late, Kazuma. We have already started! Hey, come here!”

—Call it a night festival, but it was not quite it.

This was a celebration held on the last day of the festival.

The organizers of this festival booked the entire shopping street for use as the location for a banquet.

There were the shopping street’s chairman and members, as well as Eris Cultists and Axis Cultists.

I sat next to Aqua, who arrived first.

“Hey. Letting those people stay in the same place. Isn’t it like locking a goddess and a demon in the same room?”

Hearing my analogy, Aqua looked unhappy.

“You shut-in schemer. It’s too much to describe Eris Cultists as demons. And this is to celebrate the end of the festival, right? My kids won’t make a scene during the banquet.”

Actually, I was describing the Axis Cultists as demons.

But never mind.

As Aqua said, the Axis Cultists present neither argued nor picked a fight with the Eris Cultists. Instead, they were taking the initiative to pour wine and enjoying themselves.

“Could it be that if you people have a banquet for 24 hours, you all will become amiable?”

“It felt like we were being looked down upon, but it’s not wrong. By the way, I’m like that too. If you want me to be amiable, bring me some good wine every day.”

“You are admitting that you are one of the main culprits for causing trouble.”

There were familiar people everywhere.

The priestess Cecily was rubbing her drunken face against the cheeks of a girl from Eris Cult.

For some reason, Vanir was eating together with Yunyun and Wiz. He was probably here as a member of the shopping street.



And then...

“Darkness, come. Drink! Megumin too!”

“Why are you so excited during the banquet? Hey, hey. Fine, I’ll drink. Don’t drag Megumin into this! I will drink Megumin’s share too!”

“Darkness, I’m not a kid anymore. At this time, let me drink! I’m of marriageable age! Ah, Kazuma, you came late. You help me explain this! I’m merely two years younger than Kazuma. So I’m not that young!”

Chris’ face was red as she hugged Darkness and Megumin.

Did all the goddesses love banquets?

“You are too young to drink wine. Also, Megumin and I are three years apart now. Because today is my birthday!”

That’s right. Today is my first birthday since coming to this world.

Announcing my own birthday was a bit shameless, but I didn’t want to miss the opportunity. I wished to be congratulated by everyone.

“Oh. Happy birthday? Then, Kazuma. Give me a present.”

I immediately received such congratulations...

“... Present? Ah. What are you saying? Why must I give you a present?”

Hearing this, Aqua shook her head helplessly and replied.

“Kazuma is really an idiot who doesn’t know this country’s customs. Fine, I’ll tell you. In this country, the birthday person give presents to those who took care of him in the past year out of gratitude. Something like ‘Thanks to everyone, I made it through the year safely.’”

Was that for real? This world was so evil.

But because there were monsters in this world, the average life expectancy was rather low, so this custom was...

“There was no such custom. Kazuma, happy birthday. I will give you a present later.”

Hearing Megumin’s words, I immediately seized Aqua.

“You are so good at telling such indiscernible lies, you old maid of an indeterminate age! Tell us your birthday and age, hey!”

“Wah! Kazuma said something he should never have said! I must inflict divine retribution on you!”

As Aqua and I throttled each other, Darkness said while holding her wine glass in a handkerchief.

“Kazuma, happy birthday. When we get home, I will give you a present too. Sorry. I would have prepared one, if I knew earlier.”

“Ah. Thanks. I should have mentioned it earlier. Megumin’s birthday passed by without notice. We’ll celebrate it the next time. By the way, when is Darkness’ birthday? Since you are a noble, it must be a grand party, right?”

“Eh. M-My birthday? ...Uh. T-That...”

Seeing Darkness’ gaze wandering away, Chris said simply.

“Darkness’ birthday was over a long time ago. There was a huge party in spring, right? By the way, why didn’t Assistant-kun and the rest come then?”

Hearing this, Darkness shivered. I suddenly understood.

“You. You thought that nothing good would happen if we came, so you intentionally did not invite us, right? —You thought that we would do stupid things to other nobles!”

“Is that so!? That’s too much! Oh, right. When we received the commendation of that kid Iris, she suggested we decline!”

“Punish her! Today, let’s punish this rich girl who thinks too much!”

I watched Aqua and Megumin pester Darkness, who was about to cry. At this time, Chris, who was smiling bitterly along with me, pulled on my sleeve to suggest we leave for elsewhere.

“—It was really a mess... I heard from Darkness that you are the schemer behind this entire incident?”

After we left, we were wandering nearby. The cold night wind blew on my face, which was hot from the wine. Chris said suddenly with an expression of being at odds.

After letting Eris herself appear in her beauty contest.

The manifestation of a goddess became a major news, spreading quickly to the nearby cities and even the imperial capital via magic, carrier pigeons, and even fast horses.

According to the shopping street chairman, Axel would become the city where the goddess descended, a holy place for the Eris Cultists.

“A-About this, I’m really sorry. I will help you search for the divine relics, so please let me go... But the shopping street committee said— ‘After this event, the Goddess Eris Thanksgiving Festival must definitely go on.’”

Hearing this, Chris became awkward and embarrassed.

“Is it? ... Then, since you and Aigis helped me on the stage, I will forgive you this time!”

“I’m truly grateful, my Lady Goddess. Thank you very much!”

We bantered with each other as we wandered around the city which still had liveliness left over from the festival.

After escaping safely from the beauty pageant, it was said that Aigis was completely obedient to Chris.

I heard that she will find a good master for Aigis soon, giving Aigis away as a trump card against the demon king’s army.

In this way, the search for the divine relic and the competition between the Eris Cult and the Axis Cult ended on a good note.

But thinking about it carefully, the influence of an actual goddess is really powerful.

After all, just walking along the street like this...

“Sigh... Could Eris-sama still be somewhere in this city? Since the first time I saw her portrait, I have been longing for her...”

“Even if she is still around, she won’t appear before you with your evil thoughts. Only a sincere Eris Cultist like me can meet her one day.”

“You are the one who is evil. You spent the savings for your

marriage on the teleport service just to arrive in this city quickly.”

“Fool. I’m here to get Eris-sama’s blessing on my marriage. My girlfriend agreed to this.”

We encountered two men who were enthusiastically discussing about Eris.

I rubbed shoulders with them as I walked pass.

“... Hear that? Eris-sama, aren’t you going to bless him?”

“I’m not Eris-sama. I’m Chris-sama, Assistant-kun. The only thing I can do now is to steal treasure from your house to compensate that guy for his wedding savings.”

We laughed simultaneously.

Perhaps because we suddenly stopped and laughed, someone bumped into Chris’ back.

It was a pair of young sisters. They were holding some pretty flowers.

“I-I apologize!”

“Very sorry!”

The two sisters hurriedly apologized to Chris.

“I’m the one who is sorry for stopping suddenly. Any problem? Not hurt?”

Saying, Chris lowered her head.

The younger sister dropped her flower on the ground.

Chris quickly picked up the flower.

“S-Sorry! Letting such a pretty chris drop on the ground.”

She handed the violet flower over to the girl.

“Chris? ... Is that the flower’s name?”

I looked at the flower in the girl’s hands and asked softly.

“That’s right. This flower’s name is chris. In the language of flowers, it means ‘a heart that never gives up’.”

Hearing Chris’ explanation, the older sister said in admiration.

“Eh. That. Why do you have a scar on your face? Are you an adventurer? Dad says that adventurers are unruly. But why would an unruly person be so familiar with flowers?”

The rapid string of questions common to children was causing some difficulty for Chris.

She scratched her scar on her cheek and said.

“Uh... This scar was gained during the fight with the bad guys in the demon king’s army. I’m indeed an adventurer. And not all adventurers are unruly, like this big brother here.”

She smiled happily as she looked at me.

“And I’m only familiar with this flower. Look. This flower has the same color as my eyes, right? I like this chris flower very much.”

Chris bended her waist and met the eyes of both girls, bringing her face close to the flower to catch its scent.

“So that’s how it is. This flower is an offering to Eris-sama. My sister and I pooled our savings to buy this.”

“Yes. Because Eris-sama also loves this flower!”

“Eh... So impressive. To even know what Eris-sama loves! But if Eris-sama finds out that kids like you are spending your savings on flower offerings, she would be happy but also sad at the same time. So limit it to this one time. This way, Eris-sama would be pleased.”

Chris said in embarrassment and gently ruffled their heads.

“Is it? ... But we wanted to thank Eris-sama.”

“... Thank?”

She said to the puzzled Chris.

“Yes. Thank. Mom said that everyone could live peacefully because Eris-sama grants people all kinds of power to resist the evil demon king.”

“And that Eris-sama secretly did a lot of good deeds, so we want to thank Eris-sama and cheer her on.”

“I-Is that so? ... Then, even if you don’t make any offering hereafter, Eris-sama would be very happy to know your hearts. She will definitely be grateful for your support.”

Saying, she looked troubled as she scratched her cheek.

Her face showed an expression as if she just received redemption.

The younger sister looked at her and said.

“... By the way, your eyes and hair are of the same color as

Eris-sama.”

Kids were really incredibly sensitive.

The older sister was also staring at her hair as Chris started to panic.

The girl thought for a while and offered her flower to Chris.

“My sister already has the offering, so this flower is for you. Adventurer, thank you for protecting us from monsters!”

“Thanks!”

Saying, the sisters smiled and pushed the flower to Chris.

This was probably just a childish whim.

“Ah. Haha. Fine, fine. I lost to you both. I-I want to thank you both...!”

Chris blushed after receiving an unexpected present from the girl.

Her eyes were on the verge of tears. She smiled shyly and stuttered.

The two girls smiled and ran off.

“Then, farewell, big brother! Bye bye!”

“Bye bye!”

“Eh!? Wait! I’m not a big brother. I’m a big sister!”

After being ambushed at the time of parting, Chris was on the verge of tears for a different reason.

“I say. Does the name Chris come from...”

Chris brought her face close to the flower in her hand, closed her eyes, and sniffed at its fragrance.

“Yes. It comes from this flower.”

She watched the two girls leave with a face full of blessings.

“... I thought you just randomly changed one or two letters from ‘Eris’.”

“What kind of person did you think I am?”

She stared at me with the flower close to her nose.

“You are of course... a person who silently and continuously worked hard alone, the only person I respect.”

“... I-Is it? Like this huh. Never mind. Yes. This is fine.”

“Oh. Embarrassed? Are you embarrassed, Big Boss?”

“You are long-winded and annoying, Assistant-kun. Shut up.”

“Even with your back turned towards me, I know. You are blushing so hard that even your ears are red. Eris-sama is really cute. Marry me?”

“Annoying. Mr. Kazuma, you are irritating. If you tease a goddess, you will suffer divine retribution. And don’t say such things casually. I will tell Darkness and Megumin that Mr. Kazuma proposed marriage to me.”

Chris walked on more hastily without looking back.

She maintained her pose with her back towards me, blushed, and said unwillingly.

“I say, Assistant-kun.”

“What?”

She walked on in big strides, holding the flower in her hands tightly like it was a precious treasure.

“... Thank you for helping me so much.”

Because of the words of her young worshippers, the Lady Goddess felt that her secret efforts were being rewarded. She said softly words that contained various meanings.

When I caught up to this cute and easily bullied friend—

Because this troublesome yet lively festival was over, there was a slight sense of loneliness.

Epilogue 2: After the End of the Festival

After the festival ended, on a certain day when the city returned to its usual peacefulness.

Aqua lay on the sofa and played with the yellow fur ball on the empty shell, which still maintained a sense of presence. She said happily.

“Kazuma. Cecily sent a letter to thank you. ‘Thanks to you, the Axis Cult’s Axel branch has successfully completed our work. As arranged by the Eris Cult, next year’s festival will be co-hosted by both cults. This is all the credit of Kazuma-san who donated a lot of cash. We therefore consider you an honorary Axis Cultist.’”

“Damn it!”

“Wah!”

Without explanation, I tore up the letter Aqua was reading.

“Too much! You Sukapon NEET! What are you dissatisfied with the thank-you letter my cultist wrote with so much effort!?”

TL Note: Sukapon is the main robot in the fighting Nintendo game, Joy Mech Fight. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joy_Mech_Fight

“I’m dissatisfied with everything! Why must I become your worshipper!? This is a punishment game!”

In the end, I gave all the money I made as an advisor to Aqua.

My sense of guilt was overflowing after learning Aqua used

her reward for the Kowloon Hydra hunt, along with her usual savings, for the festival.

I helped to rebuild the dilapidated church. This should cancel out my role of scheming behind the scene... I thought.

“Hehe. Kazuma is being coy. This is a form of coyness, right? Cecily said that Kazuma-san is very coy, so when he says ‘hate’, one should take it to mean the opposite.”

“I hate that woman and you.”

“... Why don’t I have an adoring feeling when you are being coy with me?”

Aqua sat down before me and suddenly tilted her head to ask.

“Oh, right. Kazuma. There’s something I want to ask you. I heard Eris appeared in the beauty contest. Do you know where she went? She’s too much. If she came down here, she should have come to greet me. She’s so heartless towards her sempai.”

She caused so much trouble for Eris and still prided herself as a sempai. That was really impressive from a certain point of view.

I felt impressed as I stood up from the sofa and picked up Emperor Zell, who was sticking to Vanir’s empty shell.

I thought everything was resolved, but I still hadn’t decide on what to do with this fellow.

Wasn’t that a way to make use of this chick with great magic power?

“If you treat Emperor Zell so roughly, you will suffer in the

future. When Emperor Zell grows up, I can't stop it if it attacks you."

"Then I'll finish it off while it is still small."

"... Don't worry. Emperor Zell is kind and magnanimous. Don't be afraid... Come, Emperor Zell, come to me. This guy is as scary as the meat store uncle on the third street. Be careful."

Who was the meat store uncle?

Emperor Zell returned to the empty shell and lay down idly.

"Sigh... The work was finally done... The manifestation of Eris-sama was great, but the sudden influx of tourists is overwhelming..."

Darkness, who was busy with the lordship duties, rubbed the sides of her head.

"Good work. The lordship duties must be difficult. The manifestation of Eris-sama caused a lot of tourists coming from various cities, but the economy has improved as a result as well. Isn't it good?"

"It's good that there are many people... Sigh. My father has started recovering during the festival. The troublesome lordship duties will be over today. From now on, I can do quests without reservations."

"Ah? What are you saying? I'm really not doing it anymore. There is no reason for doing quests. For livelihood, I can use my Cooking skill to open a restaurant with cute waitresses, catering to both my interest and profits. I won't take on quests anymore. Right, Aqua?"

"Right. For now, I want to educate Emperor Zell, so forget

about quests. I used all the money from Kazuma on rebuilding the church, funding next year's festival, and the banquet. Hereafter, I'll live leisurely on Kazuma's money, so I won't take on dangerous quests. Yes. I want to live idly in this mansion every day and be worshipped during the annual festival."

After hearing my words, Aqua expressed her agreement.

"... Hey, wait. Why must I spend money on you? I don't mind covering for the food expenses, but earn your own money for your other personal expenditures... And you already used up all the money I gave you?"

"Yes. Don't worry about my personal expenditures. I have two or three new money-making schemes."

.....

"You people. You were so enthusiastic during the festival... By the way, Aqua, what are those money-making schemes? Tell me before you do anything."

"Don't want to."

..... Aqua covered her ears and pretended not hear the inevitable lecture from Darkness.

I caressed Emperor Zell in my palm as I looked at them.

Megumin came down from the second floor in a one-piece dress.

Seeing the usual quarrelsome scene, she smiled happily and sat down beside me.

"It's too bad we couldn't properly enjoy the festival. While we were busy, the festival ended— But this is rather like our

style.”

“That’s true. A festival should be more frolic, noisy, joyful, and sentimental. Why must we despondently fight monsters during the fireworks display? I wish we could make the festival longer. At least have a proper fireworks display.”

I complained in dissatisfaction. Thinking back on the fireworks display, we nearly created a good mood.

Looking at me like this, Megumin laughed happily.

“... Right. It’s Kazuma’s birthday. I must give you a birthday present.”

“Anything is fine. But I’m somewhat concerned about what you will give me. Don’t be like Aqua and give me some strangely shaped rock, okay?”

Hearing this, Megumin suddenly came close and whispered into my ear.

“Could you come to my room tonight? I have something important to say to you.”



Special: To Realize A Man's Romance

The residential floor of Wiz's Magic Tool Shop.

"Uh, Lady Aqua... It's difficult for me to work if you keep hugging me..."

Aqua was tightly hugging Wiz from behind as Wiz worked at a small table.

"You are cooling and comfortable to hug. There are no customers anyway, so it doesn't matter if you are not in the shop, right? Stay in my room for this summer then."

"E-Even if you say so..."

Although it wasn't swelteringly hot, the heat wave at this time was still unbearable.

She had no intention of leaving Wiz's cool lich body during this period.

"Won't Wiz be purified if you keep touching her? Don't hinder her work. Let her go."

"Don't worry. I'm suppressing my divine aura. As long as I keep thinking about despicable things, the purification power will naturally be weak."

"... What are you thinking about in the middle of the day? Slut."

"... I'm merely thinking about the things Kazuma usually does."

As Aqua and I traded insults, Wiz raised her head while being hard at work.

“It’s completed!”

She showed us the thing in her hands.

“I have been wondering for a while. What are you making?”

Hearing my question, Wiz looked happy as if saying “Good question”.

“This is my latest magic item! It’s a bit embarrassing to say it myself, but this is a flawless and convenient item! Although it has limited charges, it allows anyone to easily use healing magic...”

Aqua, who had been sticking herself on Wiz’s back, interrupted her and smashed the magic item with her fist.

“Ah!? What are you doing, Lady Aqua? I spent so much effort to make this!”

Wiz cried out. Aqua hugged her back again, continuing a silent protest.

It seemed she didn’t like everyone being able to use healing magic.

I said to Wiz as she cried over the ruined magic item in her hands.

“I’m sorry, Wiz. I will pay for the cost of making this item... Hey, don’t suddenly pretend to sleep!”

Hearing something about paying, Aqua quickly closed her eyes and tightly buried her face in Wiz’s back.

“I-It seems I won’t make a loss then. I can probably make it through the month...”

Wiz looked relieved. I looked at the ruined magic item and said.

“But Wiz is a famous wizard, right? Can’t you create something that is easy to sell? Normal wizards can’t easily make something like this, right?”

“Yes. Creating magic items require a lot of mana. For a magic item like this, I think only the magic artisans of Crimson Magic Clan can create it.”

True to the rumors, Wiz was really excellent.

I suddenly thought of something and asked experimentally.

“Hypothetically, can you make a doll operated by using mana? Not the suspicious things used by Vanir for attacking, but a doll shaped like a pretty girl.”

“It’s possible. I can create something that can do simple housework and it looks like a normal human.”

.....

“Sell that!!”

“Eh!? Ah. No, it’s possible to make, but it will be very expensive.”

“That is not a problem! It will sell! It definitely will sell! And the people with strange names like mine would definitely buy it!”

To think that she could make an android. I couldn’t suppress my excitement.

“It will sell? Uh. I think it would be cheaper to make a golem or hire maids...”

Leaving maids aside, a pretty girl type of robot was every man’s romantic dream.

There must be many Japanese who thought the same way.

“It would be perfect if it can speak. But a pretty girl doll that can do housework is enough. It will sell. This is definitely profitable!”

“Speaking simple words is possible, but...”

“Perfect!”

I shouted uncontrollably.

Shocked by my shout, Wiz said apologetically.

“No. They are really simple responses...! At most, something like ‘Yes, master’ or ‘Welcome back, master’...”

“I will buy without hesitation. I hope you can work on this immediately. Listen, Wiz. Believe me, this will change the times.”

“Y-Yes! I will work hard. I’m somewhat excited now too!”

“That’s the way! I will also help you with whatever I can!”

On the verge of tears, Wiz looked at me warmly—

“Then, I have something I would like Kazuma-san to help right now...”

—And said something deeply meaningful.

... By the way, was Wiz's back glowing?

“For some time now, my back was feeling very hot. If this goes on, I will be incinerated... Please think of a way to let Aqua-sama... It hurts! Aqua-sama, it's hot! Get up quickly, Aqua-sama!”

“Hey, Aqua, get up! You fool, why are you glowing!? Wiz is going to do something incredible. Stop sleeping!!”

—By the way, the pretty girl doll that I anticipated was a useless thing that must use Explosion magic after moving about for half a day.

ATO GAKI

変装
バシないかなあ...

Handwritten signature
2015.



8巻発売

おめでとうございます!

アニメ楽しみにしています!

めたっき+くらん





Well this happens all the time,
I'm not anticipating anything.

You are really not
anticipating anything?



... Well, there is a bit of anticipation.

Only a bit of anticipation?



.....

... I, for the longest time, have wanted to
reveal what has been hidden in my heart.



GIFTING this
WONDERFUL WORLD
with **BLESSINGS!**



..... Don't Anticipate.
Don't Anticipate.
Don't Anticipate.....
(whines)



**COMING
SOON!!**



GIFTING this WONDERFUL WORLD with BLESSINGS! SPIN OFF

CONSULTING with this **MASKED DEVIL!**

also **COMING SOON!!**

After Vol. 8
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